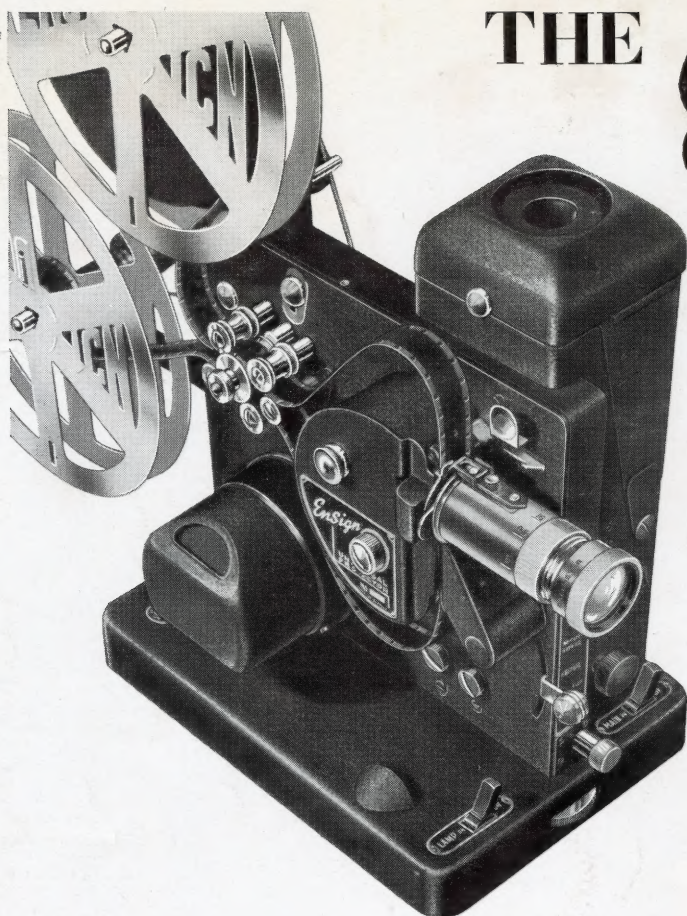


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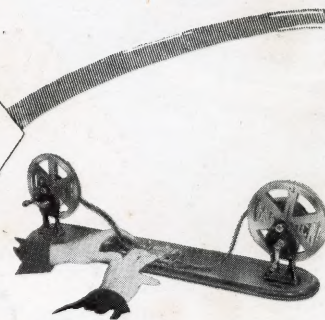
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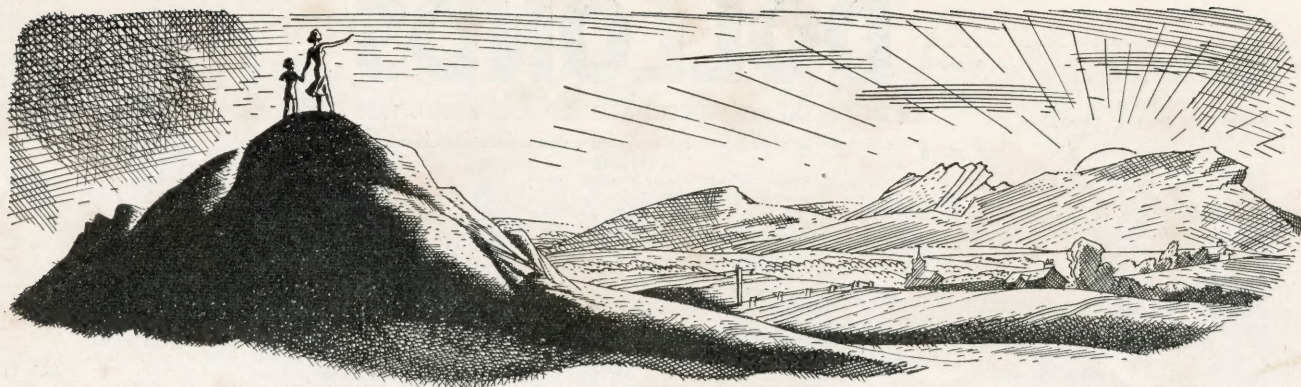
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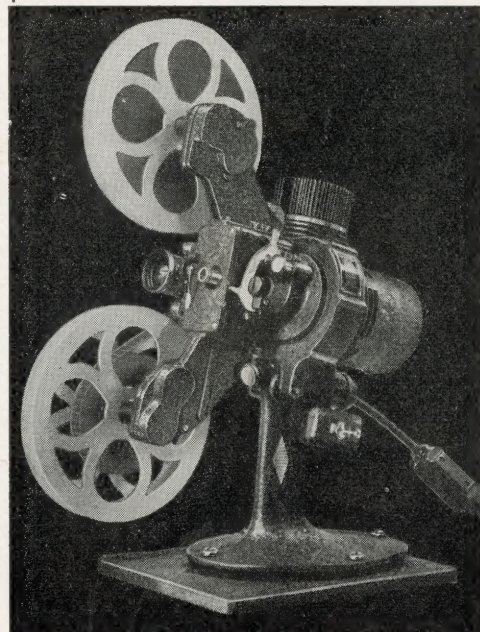
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Dekko Standard, 9.5 mm.; Ross f/1.9 lens; good condition

Dekko de Luxe, 9.5 mm.; 1 in. Ross f/1.9; interchangeable; Dallmeyer x 2 green filter; 2 chargers; case; very good condition; list £17 0 0

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Bell & Howell 129 D, 16 mm.; takes 1,600 ft. reels; 750 watt light; complete with transformer; as new; list £94 9 0

Agfa Movector, 16 mm.; 5 cm. Oppotar lens; 100 watt lamp; resistance in projector; good condition

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Pathe "H", 9.5 mm.; as new

Pathe Home Movie, 9.5 mm.; double claw; motor; resistance; good condition

Coronet Model II, 9.5 mm.; motor drive; case; as new; cost £9 17 6

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AMATEUR CINE WORLD

Vol. VI March, 1940 No. 12
(Published February 16th)

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Gordon S. Malthouse
Editor

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Before-and-After Films - - - By The Editor

YOU know the before-and-after advertisements: gentlemen all pessimism and pimples in the first picture and in the second, gloriously hale and muscle-bound, solely through one application of Zoggo. They provide us with amusement and we half believe. One could wish that the principle could be extended to amateur movie-making. The effect would be salutary but not in the least funny. Instead of the customary show of a selection of the "Ten Best," we wish we could present some of the films as we first saw them and then screen the finally edited versions. Together they would teach far more about movie-making than could be learnt from however intelligent an appraisal of the prize-winning efforts alone.

Some of the prize-winning films, it is true, have been substantially the same in both phases. They are the work of the specialists, the amateurs who every year turn out a carefully planned production, who spend months in its preparation before ever a foot is exposed. They budget for one or two pictures annually, and if they take odd personal shots of the family and holidays from time to time, we never see them. But their family and holidays often provide the theme of their films. One calls to mind the family films of Frank Marshall, John Martin, T. Lawrenson—domestic cameos which, by reason of first-rate film-craft, entertain a far larger audience than the family circle can encompass.

Mr. Marshall has two films in the running for the 1939 "Ten Best" (the full results will be announced next month) both of them featuring his children, Muriel and Nairn. One is a film play with an amusing plot

which, though not demanding that the people who take part should be other than themselves, gives excellent opportunities to the cast. And as a portrait of the children, revealing their impishness and buoyant natures, it is more compelling and revealing of character than any unplanned collection of odd shots could ever be.

Part of the author's success is due to the fact that he invents the plot to fit the cast. Many amateurs fail at domestic comedies because they choose situations outside the experience of the players, destroying at once the 'personal' atmosphere by reason both of the far-fetched plot and because the family try to be other than what they are. Heads of families are rarely burglars or blackmailers in real life—or, at any rate, rarely engage in these activities other than on a minor scale—and if your daughter turns out to be a long-lost princess stolen at birth by gypsies, then you have every right to be surprised and suspicious.

A Holiday Picture

Mr. Marshall's second film is in the nature of a holiday picture. No doubt most of us, had we gone to visit relations on a farm, would have contented ourselves with shots of the animals, the cows being milked and whatever form of cultivation was being carried on at the time, the whole nicely interwoven with continuity shots of the family stroking horses, patting dogs and pretending to be asleep in the hay. But Mr. Marshall had other ideas. He sees the full implications of the subject and his imagination colours it. Two town children go to the country. How do they fare? How do the country cousins take to the invasion? A danger here of slapstick?

Yes, but he is careful to keep the situations within the bounds of credibility.

Mr. Martin does not seem to have made a 'family' picture for some time. His 1938 effort was "Man on the Road"; his entry for the 1939 "Ten Best" is a film on the making of bread, with sound-on-disc commentary.

But we have wandered some way from before-and-after films. Unfortunately they could never be shown as such, but if you need to be convinced that the result would indeed be revealing, consider these few extracts from recent letters:

"You criticised — for me over a year ago, as a result of which I cut it extensively and was able to win a prize for it in the last Scottish Amateur Film Festival."

(Continued on next page)



Catford Films have been giving many film shows to Civil Defence organisations, hospitals and evacuees. Although an amateur unit, they have the use of a professional-looking van.



Detail shots of this kind will invariably be found useful for assisting continuity.

"I thank you very much indeed for the criticism, which is all that one could wish for, being most interesting and instructive . . . It will certainly help me along the right road. I have been wanting this kind of criticism from an expert for a long time. You cannot imagine how pleased I am to get it and thank you most sincerely and gratefully."

"Very many thanks for your criticism of my film. This is a big help to me as I rarely see any amateur work except my own, being a lone worker. I am very amused at the things I had not noticed."

"Many, many thanks for your criticism of my film. It did not take me very long to realise how very true it all was. Like many others, I have fallen into the bad habit of sticking in all the shots, for the only reason that they are good angles or exposures . . . I've had the scissors to work with a vengeance and need I say how great the improvement."

Cutting

That last extract has some significance. It refers to a film which has reached the final round. Camera-work is very good and all of the shots are well seen and well exposed. But the film is too long. The technically perfect shot is bad if it is in the wrong context. One can rarely cut too much, but it is fatally easy to cut too little.

Often little gems of film-craft are imbedded in films that come our way; they only need to be dug out and polished up. Living with the film, as it were, the author cannot always consider it dispassionately. He cannot always be sure that his knowledge of the subject has created a state of mind

The Editor to his Readers

(Continued from previous page)

that unconsciously fills in any gaps in the narrative. This is particularly the case with films of a personal nature; with the film play the problem does not arise to the same formidable degree.

A case in point is a 1,100 ft. Kodachrome film sent us a week or so ago by a naval officer. He wrote: "I set out to make a film of Malta, extending over a year, but our sudden departure at the time of the Albanian crisis obliged me to abandon this idea and the result, as far as it had progressed, is consequently patchy. I have thereafter attempted to extract the greatest 'interest value' from opportunities offered, also to exploit colour photography and the picturesque."

We do not read letters accompanying films until after the films have been screened, so that we can bring an unbiassed mind to them, but had we read this letter before screening the picture we should have been filled by the direst misgiving by that statement about exploiting colour photography.

We should have expected to see a riot of colour, endless shots of flower beds and sunsets. That is what deliberate 'exploitation' of colour often amounts to. In the case of this film, however, colour is intelligently used and only in one instance does it flaunt itself.

So we decided not to do anything further about a certain measure we had in mind. In these days the citizen is hemmed about with laws and restrictions and we thought we might as well have a crack at getting one passed, one that would be framed something on the following lines: "No amateur may take shots of flower-beds within one year of first using colour film, since to do so might give pleasure to the enemy." It is a very drastic law and there would need to be many amendments to it and provision for its

judicious disregard, but we feel that it is quite sound in principle.

Well, now, in this film, "Mediterranean Memories of 1939," there is some first-rate material: warships at sea, a torpedo being fired, an episode in the Spanish Civil War, scenes of the military in Palestine, a trip to Egypt. We were quite enthralled by these sequences, but had to plough through a good deal of barren ground to get to them.

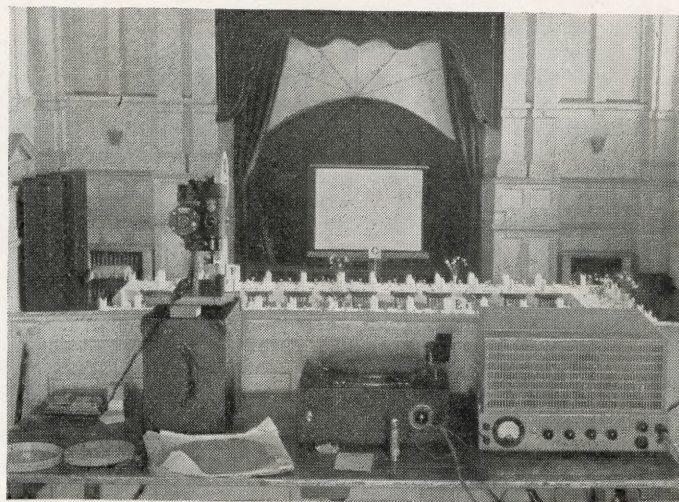
The author could not, apparently, get over his disappointment at not being able to make a complete film of Malta. He should have discarded most of the Malta sequences—or, rather, found a place for them in another film. Instead, he builds the film round them and the material we find so much more interesting is made subservient to them.

But he says that if the film is reconstructed according to our suggestions it would no longer be to his family and friends what its name implies. Surely, though, it is unkind to suggest that one's family and friends would not appreciate good construction in a film and that anything is good enough?

Certainly we should not suggest taking out shots of a personal nature—such shots, after all, are what most of us set out to secure, but they should be relegated to their proper place. For instance, the author shows club amenities ashore, such as golf and water sports. But a brief reference is all that is really desirable.

We should not suggest taking out the interesting shots of the author's friends bathing on the Palestine coast, but we would suggest making more of the shot of the patrol guarding them as they sport about. Until the author told us, indeed, we were not sure that the patrol was there for that purpose.

The suggested re-arrangement and reconstruction would not lessen the personal appeal of the film. On, the contrary, since the film would move more swiftly, they would strengthen it. Good technique is its own reward.

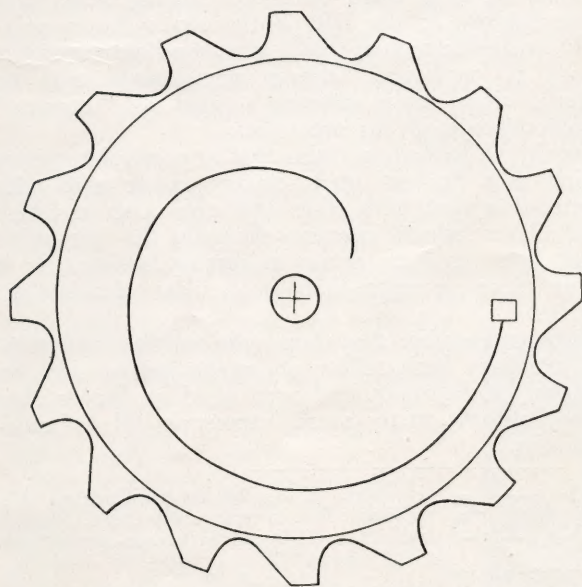


O.P. Unit all ready for the show. Photograph shows Finchley A.C.S. apparatus set up for an after-dinner at an outside show. The society is now very well booked for cine shows to various organisations.

DIAL E..X..P.. ..OSURE

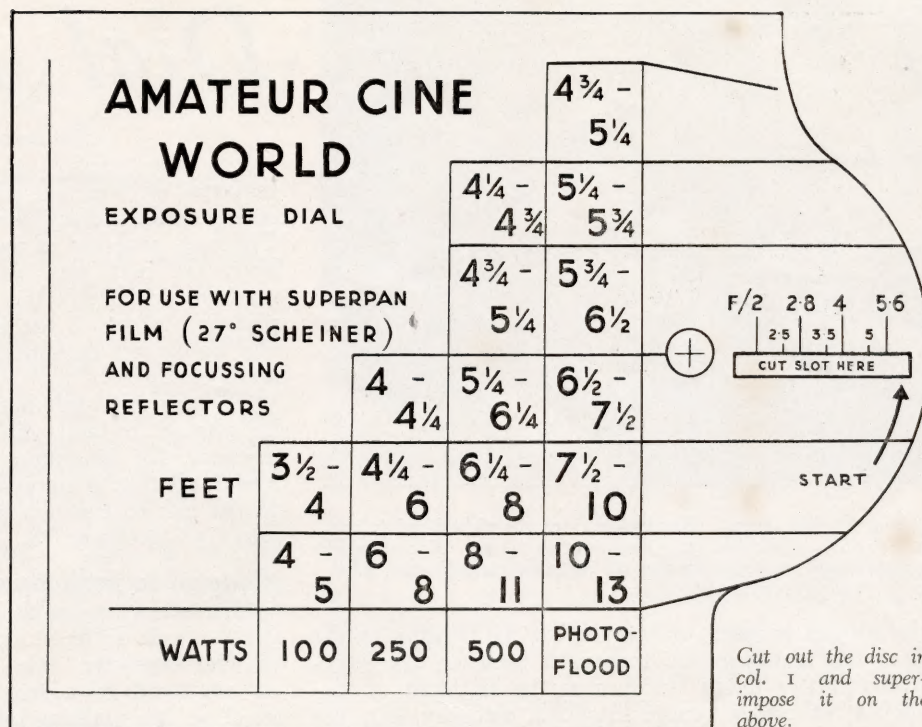
With this ingenious exposure dial you can dial correct exposure for artificial light in the same way as you would dial a telephone number. If you are venturing on simple interiors for the first time, this gadget will prove of immense help to you — as it will also to the experienced worker.

Designed by
R. H. ALDER



MANY amateurs frankly put away their cameras at the end of one summer till the beginning of the next. Indoor work strikes them as too artificial and too complicated, especially when it comes to calculating exposure on "the law of inverse squares" — whatever they may be.

On the subject of artificiality one can only repeat the assurance which every bold spirit has found true, that the fireside is the one place where the family feels itself at home and therefore acts naturally, so long as it is given some homely thing to do. The main intention of this article is to eliminate all traces of complexity in exposure calculation, so that no technical troubles need stand in the way.



Thanks to the Postmaster-General, everyone by now is acquainted with the dialling telephone. The calculator makes it as easy to dial the correct exposure for a given combination of lights as it was to get together a bridge-party in pre-war days.

Non-essentials have been eliminated. The wattages shown are those which an ordinary amateur is likely to handle, including the useful 100-watt household lamp and the still more convenient Photoflood. Above the wattages are squares showing the ranges of distances from lamp to subject in feet.

Just Dial the Lights

Before the calculator is used, the dial is set so that the little square is seen, through the slot, opposite the arrow "Start." Then the lamps in front of the subject are dialled consecutively: above the wattage of each lamp is found the horizontal line containing its distance from the subject and, with the tip of the right fore-finger, the corresponding dial-notch is pushed down as far as it will go.

When all the lamps have been dialled (in any order) the indicator line, visible through the horizontal slot, shows the appropriate lens-aperture for superpan film of 27°-28° Scheiner.

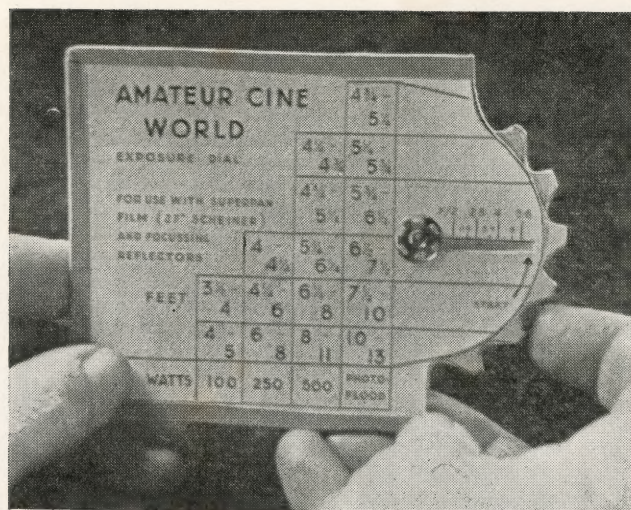
It is assumed that focussing reflectors, such as Kodaflectors, are used with the lamps. If any matte (diffusing) reflectors are used, the lamps in those reflectors should be dialled as if their distances from the subject were half as great again, i.e., a lamp at 7 feet is dialled as if it were 10 1/2 feet away.

In calculating exposure any spotlight used for back-lighting, or even a top-light between subject and background, should be ignored.

Other Uses

The calculator can be used for estimating the relationship between the lighting on the background and that

(Continued on next page)



Dialling the last lamp. The forefinger of the right hand is just about to dial a photoflood (in reflector) at eight feet. As the finger tip moves down to the bottom stop, the indicator line will travel along the slot from f/3 (approx.) to f/3.5.

on the subject proper. After dialling the lighting on the subject, the distances are measured between the background and any lights which may be in front of it—top-lights, of course, come into this category, but not spots.

If it is found that the exposure dialled for the background is more than half-a-stop larger than that for the subject, more light should be introduced between subject and background. It is in this respect that those amateur indoor shots which show a quality lower than that of the professional screen are generally in default.

Similarly the calculator can be used to ascertain whether the shadow illumination is up to standard. Unless specially hard effects are being sought, the lamps shining directly on the shadow side should also dial up to an aperture not more than half-a-stop, or at most one stop, larger than the full illumination.

Careful checking up against visual estimates of lighting-balance will prove that on these questions the calculator is a far more reliable indicator than the eye, which is continually adjusting itself to different levels of illumination.

The collection of odd shots which every ardent worker acquires may well be examined to see if it will yield suggestions for a new scenario. A good start is to assemble all those which deal with the same basic subject such as "water," "infancy" or "speed."

A cheap, still camera is a real film-saver in holiday time. All those continuity shots of sign-posts, mural inscriptions or the like, and also pictorial title backgrounds, can be made as single negatives and printed, in a titler, on cheaper positive stock, when the holiday is over.

When no dark room is available the camera always jams. In a darkened bedroom the camera on the bed is covered first with a dark coat and then with the bedclothes. The hands are inserted under the blankets and through the sleeves of the coat; unloading is carried out by touch in this improvised changing bag.

ODD SHOTS

In contre-jour shots over water, surface reflection halates the film and destroys detail. A polarisation filter can be arranged to cut out a great deal of the glare. The cure is most effective when the camera points down at an angle of 30 degrees.

A focussing scale visible from the rear of the camera is an enormous advantage. A short lever extension is fitted to the focussing-ring by a friction-grip collar and moves across a celluloid scale projecting on the side of the camera. Now is the time to fit it in preparation for spring.

Before starting after-treatment on a film which has been dried, the gelatine should be softened by at least five minutes' immersion

Dial E..X..P..

(Continued from previous page)

The construction is simple. The two sections are mounted on card and cut out, the slot is cut in the larger section and the disc is eyeletted behind the table of figures. The only problem of registration is to see that the eyelet holes are both punched really central. The device is made more durable if a piece of plain stout card or thin plywood is cut to the same shape as the larger section and bound up behind by passe-partout round the three straight edges.

The aperture scale has been devised so that it can easily be altered to suit different speeds of stock. If, for instance, the cameraman wishes to use a film of twice the speed, all that is necessary is to shift the scale one step to the left so that f/2 becomes f/2.8, f/2.8 becomes f/4 and f/5.6 becomes f/8.

Adapted to Individual Requirements

The steps are equidistant, so that, if the cinematographer's favourite stock shows consistent slight-under- or over-exposure, even smaller alterations of one-half or one-third of a stop can similarly be made. This is done by marking off duplicate scales on gummed paper and sticking them over the existing scale in a position slightly to the left (if the stock shows over-exposure with the regular scale) or to the right (if under-exposure is prevalent). These adjustments may be necessary, since every amateur's idea of "correct" exposure depends on his projector.

It would be foolish to claim that any calculator is as unflinching as a modern photo-electric meter used with discrimination, but tests show that the cases in which this calculator fails to interpret correctly the light-value are not likely ever to occur in family filming. It is certainly more accurate than a calculator for daylight exposures.

It follows therefore that those who use limited equipment, and have hesitated to undertake indoor work on account of doubt about exposure, need no longer shut the door on this vastly more interesting side of cinematography.

in water. If the film has been handled, it is advisable first to remove any traces of grease with flannel dipped in carbon-tetrachloride (or "Thawpitt").

A necessary adjunct to the projector is a roll of self-adhesive tape slightly narrower than the gauge of film. On the rare occasions when a break occurs, the gate can be rethreaded from the top spool and the loose bottom end of film joined to the take-up with an inch or so of the tape.

THIS TITLING BUSINESS

We regret that owing to pressure on space it has been necessary to hold over the sixth article in this series, with its accompanying two specimen alphabets. They are the final alphabets to be reproduced with this series and are of a distinctly unusual type, particularly suitable for titles descriptive of special effects.

Film and Projector Maintenance

ALL motorists know that their cars require periodical overhaul, greasing and similar treatment if they are to function properly. Failure to give them a certain amount of attention often results in breakdowns which generally occur in the most awkward places.

Projectors, like cars, need periodical oiling and checking in the same way, but a regrettably large number of projector owners seem unaware of this fact. The penalty is unlikely to be a breakdown in the presence of an audience—although we have had experience of this happening—but neglect will certainly cut several years off the useful life of an expensive piece of apparatus.

Such maintenance as is required can easily be carried out by yourself. Never think that such work is too much trouble, or that it is undignified. There is nothing undignified in paying tribute to the beauty of precision workmanship by the practical method of preserving it at its peak of efficiency.

Points Needing Attention

The points which require looking after are (a) maintenance of cleanliness of the parts with which the film makes contact and (b) cleaning and oiling of moving parts.

Under heading (a) come the gate, sprockets and idlers. It may happen that in running a film a certain amount of emulsion will remain adhering to the gate, building up into 'corns' or mounds of horny texture. These will catch in the sprocket holes, resisting the passage of the film, and placing great strain on it. The presence of these corns can generally be detected by an increase of noisiness of the projector while it is running.

The projector should be stopped and the emulsion removed at the earliest possible moment. It may sometimes be possible to wait until the end of a reel before doing this, but this risk should only be taken when showing to an audience. At other times it is better to deal with the trouble at the earliest possible moment.

The emulsion is, of course, a mixture of gelatine and silver, and can be softened by moisture. It is generally possible, therefore, to remove it with a damp rag, but this must be followed by thorough drying. An alternative method is to scrape the emulsion off, but on no account must a hard metal scraper be used for this purpose.

Many projectors have included with their accessories a bone spatula or scraper, which very often has a flat, thin brush at the other end. Alternatively you can make yourself a scraper of brass, copper or hardwood. In

Bent to the storm. If in a sequence in your film dejection and desolation need to be stressed—even though it may be a human being's dejection—a shot such as this would be a useful cut-in.

Next month we publish the final article in the series on the technical features of camera and projector. Previous articles have included notes on the mechanism and operation of both instruments, framing, focussing and the home cine show.

some projectors the gate can be removed, but if you do this in order to remove emulsion, do not press down too hard on the unsupported gate or you may permanently distort it.

An excellent tip is to smear some very thin oil, such as 3-in-1, over the gate and pressure plate, carefully wiping all excess away. This will serve two purposes. First of all it will resist the tendency for emulsion to pick up on the gate. For this reason it is a good plan to adopt this tip when running films newly received from the processing station, as these 'green' films are particularly prone to offset their emulsion. The professional projectionist recognises this tendency in green films, and combats it by applying a film of wax to the film itself down both edges around the sprocket holes. The second effect of the oil film is to resist any tendency to rust under damp conditions.

Emulsion will similarly build up around the teeth of the sprockets, and may remain unnoticed for a considerably long time, until one day the film will run off and be badly damaged. That will be because the presence of the emulsion has increased the effective diameter of the sprockets,

(Continued on next page)



so that the film is running nearer the tops of the teeth. The emulsion must be picked away very carefully and the sprockets given a final polish with a soft cloth.

Treatment under (b) includes all the film transit mechanism, and parts accessory thereto. In some projectors a central oilhole is provided through which a reservoir is filled. From this, oil passes through a number of tubes or ducts to important parts of the mechanism. Even with these so-called 'one-shot' lubrication methods, it will be found necessary to oil separately outlying parts of the mechanism such as the spool-arm spindles.

In some projectors felt pads are included in the lubrication system, which enable a relatively large quantity of oil to be retained in use for a considerable period. In yet other cases parts of the mechanism have self-lubricating bearings which will not need external lubrication during the whole life of the instrument.

These facts will be set forth in the instruction book of the machine, which should be studied carefully. If you have purchased a second-hand machine you may be able to obtain a copy of the instruction book from the makers. In any case, it is customary to mark oil holes on nearly all projectors by means of a tiny blob of red paint.

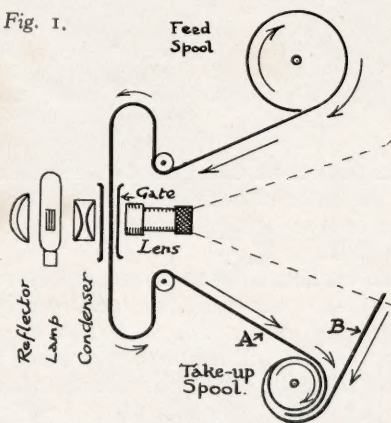
Give your projector a drop or two of oil before each show, running it for a few minutes immediately after applying the oil. It is as important to avoid over-oiling as under-oiling. An excess of oil may spatter on to the film, which is bad for the latter. It may get on to the grooves of pulleys, which will cause the belts to slip, or it may even get into the free-wheel mechanism on feed and take-up pulleys and cause these to function incorrectly. Petrol, carbon tetrachloride or methylated spirit can be used to remove excess oil. Paraffin is not to be recommended for this purpose.

Oil Exterior of Projector

Another use for thin oil is to rub it very lightly over the exterior of the machine. It will protect the bright parts from rust, and will brighten up the appearance of the enamel. Any excess must be wiped off thoroughly. If the projector is to be stored away for some time, rub oil over the exterior and put vaseline over the gate and other bright parts. The carrying case of the projector should be aired in front of the fire from time to time, and thoroughly brushed out, and the exterior polished with a good polish.

Build up and maintain a good supply of projector spools, and store them with care. You will receive your films on 30 ft. spools (for 9.5 mm.), 50 ft. or 100 ft.

Fig. 1.



Running repair during projection. The end A is tucked into the lower coil, end B being held fairly taut until the coil has revolved several times and both ends are wound singly in the take-up spool.

Film Storage and

(Continued from previous page)

spools (for 8 mm. and 16 mm.). These can be kept by for working purposes, but quite soon you will wish to transfer your film to 200 ft., 300 ft. or 400 ft. spools.

Your 'black' tin spools should be lightly oiled, or they may become rusty. Aluminium ones will need no such protection, but both should be protected from accidental bending. This can be accomplished by fitting wooden or card spacer pieces between the flanges, but a simpler method is to store the spools on a horizontal rod where they cannot come under side pressure. A bent spool can be both an irritation and a danger. Nothing is more annoying than to hear a rhythmic 'scrape' . . . 'scrape' . . . 'scrape' all the time a film is being shown, while it is quite possible for a bent feed-spool to cause the film to ride over the teeth of the adjacent sprocket and become badly damaged.

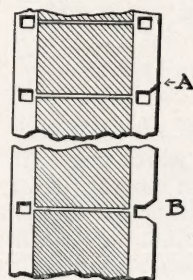


Fig. 2.

If the film is cracked as at A, the sharp corner will tend to catch in the gate and tear the film. By trimming it as at B, it will run without causing trouble.

Preserving Films

Films, when received from the processing station, will be fitted with opaque leaders. These are to be used for threading, and, when several short films are joined together, the leaders, which are cut off, should be stored on a spare spool for future use. They need not be spliced together, but can be wound on to the spool one after the other.

When lacing up the projector always follow the maker's instructions until you are certain that this method is the one which suits you best. Pull out only sufficient leader for the lacing, so that some of the leader itself comes in the gate, and the projector has to run for a moment or two before the first part of the film proper arrives there. This will ensure that, if you make a mistake in the lacing, any damage which occurs when you start up will affect the easily replaceable leader and not the film.

Before showing a film, and periodically throughout its life, it is advisable to examine the sprocket holes and splices and repair any damage. This will obviate the possibility of even graver damage occurring during projection. This question is dealt with in greater detail below.

Storage

One of the most fruitful causes of film deterioration is careless storage. If the film is placed on a spool and then left on a shelf or merely in a cardboard box, it will sooner or later become dry and brittle. The plasticisers, which preserve its pliable character, will evaporate, and the film will curl badly. At the same time, it will shrink, the splices will tend to part, and it may become impossible to run it. All this can be avoided with a little care in storage.

First of all, the film should be kept in a 'humidor can,' which is primarily a can which is more or less air-tight,

Running Repairs

and which also is fitted with an absorbent pad in the base. An ordinary can may be used, with a blotting paper pad in the bottom and a piece of perforated zinc above. The pad can be moistened with water, but the danger here is that the film may become mildewed. A better plan is to use one of the specially prepared solutions which contain aromatic oils and some form of antiseptic. They must not be used in excess or they may cause the film to become sticky, or if they are in great excess, may crystallise out on the surface of the film or even attack the image. The fluid itself should never be allowed to touch the film.

There are two other methods of preserving films. One of these, called "New Life," is a solution which seals the film and prevents the evaporation of the normal plasticisers. The other, known as the "Peerless Process," consists of impregnating the film with plasticising agents under pressure and then 'case-hardening' it to hold these in.

Horizontal or Vertical?

There have been arguments as to whether films should be stored with the spools lying flat or on their edges. Experience shows there is nothing to choose between these two methods. It is important, however, that the films should be coiled snugly around the spools. Cine film tends to retain the position in which it has been held for some time, and, if left loose round the spool, the coils may become octagonal, with the ends coiled in spiral form. The best plan is to use spring metal bands to hold the film tight, or, if preferred, long paper strips the same width as the film may be used with rubber bands outside these. It is not desirable to use rubber bands on the bare film, as the sulphur in the rubber will adversely affect the film after a time.

A Running Repair

It may happen that, in spite of all care, a film will break during projection. The problem then is to resume the show with the minimum of delay. To do this, pull out sufficient film from the feed spool to lace up the projector again and leave about a foot free beyond the bottom sprocket. Now pull out about 18 inches from the bottom spool, holding it in the right hand.

The end of the feed film is then laid on the coil of film on the take-up spool and tucked down snugly between the coil and the end which you are holding. If the take-up spool is then revolved while this loose end is kept under tension, the two pieces of film will wind in together. The fingers are kept on the coil until the projector is once more running and the bottom spool has taken one or two more turns (Fig. 1).

This method of 'running repair' is, in our opinion, superior to other suggested methods in which pins or copper clips are used to effect a temporary repair. It certainly takes up a little more film, but it is much more rapid and it does not leave the pins or clips in the film to damage the projector at some future period if the film is run again by mistake before a permanent repair has been effected.

Trimming Sprocket Holes

Note carefully whether your projector has (a) a single



The shadow on the wall is an integral feature of the composition. Without it the wall would be too bare to justify exposing film on the scene.

tooth claw, (b) twin horizontal claws, or (c) twin tandem claws. In all three cases worn or broken sprocket holes will adversely affect projection, but in (a) such damage should be

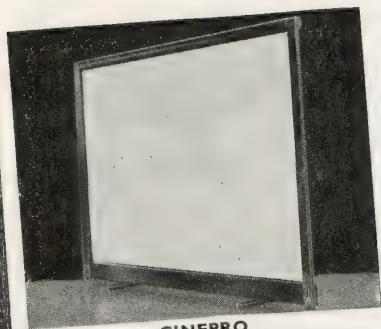
regarded as particularly serious because a broken sprocket hole may stop projection altogether.

Under the influence of wear, a sprocket hole may be gashed, or it may have a crack extending from one corner. If this crack runs inwards towards the main body of the film (which is most unusual) the film should be parted and rejoined with a splice. If, however, the crack extends towards the edge of the film, it should be trimmed, as otherwise the jagged edge may catch in the gate and cause the film to rip in half (Fig. 2). 9.5 mm. users can repair 'jagged' sprocket holes by applying oval patches provided by the makers.

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

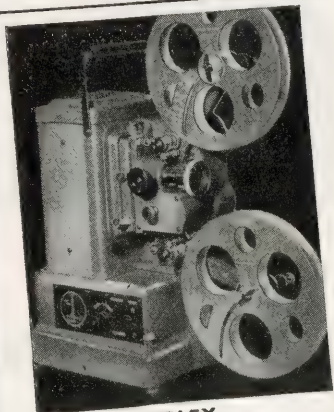
Messrs. Kodak have just issued a very useful booklet, "Motion Pictures in Education." It gives useful hints on film production, equipment and accessories, with details of Kodak products. They have also published a "List of Educational Films for Sale or Hire" (24 pages). Both booklets can be obtained from your dealer, or direct from Kodak, Ltd., Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

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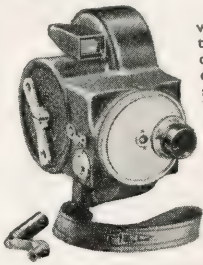
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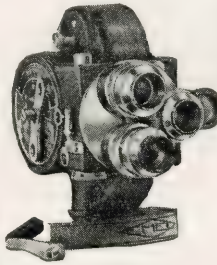
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A War, A Dog, A Bone

Food rationing is a most unpromising subject for a film, but our contributor has succeeded in presenting a pleasant little comedy which calls for no acting ability and which anyone with a dog can film.

By ALEX STRASSER, F.R.P.S.

(Author of "Ideas for Short Films")

IN the January issue of *Amateur Cine World* I undertook—rather rashly—to work out a number of shooting-scripts with war-time plots. Last month I dealt with the black-out, and this time the "topical feature" is the ration book. I have to confess that this theme nearly defeated me. I cannot remember ever dealing with a less inspiring subject and I had to intrude rather far into the wide open spaces of imagination before I found a solution which would satisfy me and, I hope, my readers as well.

The main character of the following story is a dog and I admit frankly that, when casting the parts, I may have been influenced by the fact that I had three dogs which at one time or other played more or less important parts in my films and proved to be capable of very spirited acting. That they did not achieve the prominence of the famous Rin-Tin-Tin or the popularity of Walt Disney's Pluto was perhaps not so much their own as their master's fault.

I never had any reason to complain about lack of enthusiasm on their part, a fact which did not equally

apply to all the human actors with whom I had to deal. I think it is safe to say that a dog will do almost anything within its capabilities provided it is of average intelligence. Of course, the master has to know his dog and its ways intimately if he wants to persuade it to do this or that. But it is reassuring to know that many difficult effects which look quite straightforward and "above-board" on the screen are, in reality, fakes, brought about by some technical manipulation or clever editing. Anyway, there are probably less difficulties involved in handling a dog in front of a film camera than, say, a small child.

As usual, I have endeavoured to omit any necessity for 'wild' acting. Neither the dog nor the human players have to be anything other than their natural selves. I have, however, to plead guilty to the possible objection that this story could not happen in reality. My defence is that we have rather enough of "reality" just now, and that, as long as the depicted documentary background (in this case, the rationing) is more or less correctly presented, we may be granted the licence to enjoy a few minutes of "unreal" fun.

In the following script, L=Long shot, M=Mid shot, C=Close-up, T=Title.

A Ready - To - Film

War - Time Script

1. T. SPRING 1939.
2. M. Terry and his mistress, walking down a suburban street. She carries a shopping-basket and the dog follows her gaily in the usual doggy manner.
3. M. Another shot of the two walking.
4. L. They cross the road,
5. M. turn a corner,
6. M. and reach the shopping centre. Here Terry runs ahead,
7. C. (the camera keeping pace with the dog) passes several shops, sniffing at the doorsteps,
8. M. and finally stops in front of a butcher's shop, turning round, waiting impatiently for his mistress. She arrives and enters the shop with the dog.
9. M. Interior of the shop. The lady goes to the counter and Terry sits down next to her, watching the butcher's movements with great interest.
10. M. The butcher shows the lady a large joint of beef which she seems to approve of, since he throws it on the scale and wraps it in paper. Then he speaks to Terry:
11. T. "And now for you, old boy."
12. C. Terry's tongue goes round and round his lips.
13. M. While the lady is walking over to the pay-desk the butcher bends down and gets from under the counter a beautiful big bone, shows it to Terry,
14. C. the tail of whom is now wagging excitedly,

15. M. and wraps it in paper. The mistress returns to the counter, puts the parcels in her basket and turns toward the

door, nodding goodbye. Terry jumps up fussily.

16. C. The lower part of the door from outside. The lady comes out, with Terry following her closely.

Dissolve to

17. M. Dining room. Terry's master and mistress at the table. They have just finished the soup. The maid enters with the joint and puts it on the table in front of the master.

18. C. His hands pick up knife and fork and start carving the meat.

19. C. Terry on the lawn behind the house gnaws happily at the bone between his paws.

Fade out.

20. T. AUTUMN 1939.

21. M. Newspaper-poster: WAR.

- 22-30. C. A cross-cut section of newspaper headlines, proclamations, posters, notices, etc., etc., all referring to the outbreak of hostilities and the first weeks of the war.

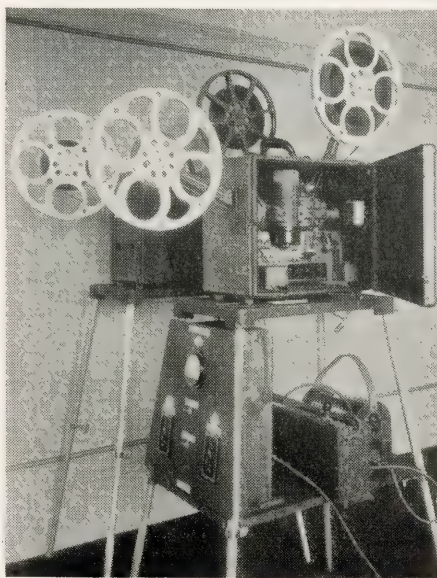
31. M. Terry's master, sitting in his garden, reads his paper.

32. C. A head-line in the paper, tracking quickly up to the camera: "FOOD RATIONING." And this scene dissolves into another quick succession of head-lines about

- 33-36. C. "Sugar," "Butter," "Bacon" and "Meat"—Rationing.

37. CM. The last head-line, "MEAT"

(Continued on next page)



Catford Films' projection unit with which they give shows to hospitals and evacuees.

TO BE RATIONED SOON," tracks quickly away from the camera and we now see that the paper is held by Terry's mistress sitting in a chair in her drawing room in a somewhat similar attitude to the one of her husband in scene 31.

38. M. At her feet lies Terry sleeping. A page of the newspaper falls down. The dog opens his eyes sleepily and gazes at the paper.

39. C. The paper and the dog's head. In front of the dog's nose is just the headline: "Meat to be rationed soon."

40. M. The dog gazes at the note, yawns, and shuts his eyes again, continuing his forty winks.

Fade out.

41. T. SPRING 1940.

42. M. The same scene as in 17. The couple sits at the table and the maid is just entering with the joint. It is considerably smaller than the one in scene 17. The maid puts it in front of the master.

43. C. As in scene 18, the hands of the master pick up knife and fork and start carving the meat.

44. M. The kitchen with Terry sitting on the floor, waiting for his meal. The maid returns, goes to the table,

45. C. unwraps the bone which also is much smaller than the one in scene 19, puts it on a tin plate, adds some rice to it,

46. C. and, bending down, shoves it under Terry's nose. Terry eyes the dish critically, takes the bone between his teeth, dangles it about, drops it, takes it up again, drops it again and, barking at the maid, complains bitterly about such an unfair treatment.

47. C. The maid looks down at the dog, shrugging her shoulders:

48. T. "Can't be helped, Terry! There is a war on."

49. C. She picks up a ration book which lies on the table and shows it to the dog.

50. C. Terry, not satisfied, continues

barking and growling over his meal.

Fade out.

Fade in.

51. C. Terry lying alone on the kitchen floor, his head between his paws, lugubriously gazing in front of him. The empty tin plate by him shows that he has eaten his meal.

52. C. The dog's eyes, dreamily wandering around, are suddenly arrested by a vision.

53. L. The whole of the kitchen. The dog in the foreground seen from behind. Now appears somewhere on the ceiling, in superimposition, a beautiful big bone. Terry lifts his head, wags his tail and jumps up, looking at the apparition.

54. C. The dog seen from the front.

55. L. As in 53. The bone disappears and re-appears in another corner of the ceiling. Terry turns his head and looks into the new direction, his tail wagging more vigorously. The bone disappears again and re-appears in still another spot. Terry watches the new apparition, and steps forward. The bone disappears.

56. C. Terry, seen from the front, looks dumbfounded. He barks at the spot where the bone disappeared and lies down again, putting his head back between his paws. Thus he lies for a while, motionless, with open eyes, but obviously absent-minded as if considering a grave problem. Suddenly Terry has come to a decision. He jumps up briskly, shakes himself,

57. M. runs to the door which is ajar and passes through it into the garden.

58. L. Terry, trotting down the street at a good speed,

59. L. crosses the road,

60. M. turns round a corner,

61. M. and arrives at the butcher's

shop. There he stops reluctantly, but after a while, summoning up courage, enters the shop.

62. L. The butcher is busy behind the counter. There are no customers. Terry, entering, walks over to the counter,

63. C. sits down and tries to catch the butcher's eye with tail-wagging and fidgeting.

64. M. At last he succeeds. The butcher looks up, stops his work and greets the dog jovially.

65. C. Terry lies down and gives the butcher a beseeching look out of the corner of his eyes. His tail is beating the floor.

66. M. The butcher is at a loss. He looks at the dog wondering what he might want.

67. M. Terry jumps up, barks once or twice and then walks round the counter,

68. M. up to the butcher. He sniffs at the shelf underneath the counter where the butcher keeps his bones and odd pieces of meat, casting again an imploring look at the man.

69. C. Now the butcher understands. He laughs, but shakes his head.

70. T. "Sorry, old boy, nothing doing."

71. C. Terry is not yet discouraged. He remains where he is, tail-wagging and tongue-playing.

72. M. The butcher, again busy, sees the dog still there. He makes Terry a sign to move on,

73. C. to which the dog still pays no attention.

74. M. The butcher gets a little annoyed and walks quickly up to the dog as if to throw him out bodily. Now Terry gives up hope, turns round and runs off

75. C. through the door,

76. L. into the street where he dismally turns home, his head hanging down and his tail between his legs.

Fade out.

Fade in.

77. L. Drawing room. It is empty except for Terry, who lies on the carpet. The door opens and the master enters the room. Terry jumps up and greets him joyfully. The master pets him, then, taking a large torch battery out of his pocket, mumbles to himself:

78. T. "Thank God, I managed to get a new battery. They were sold out everywhere."

79. M. He puts the battery on a little table next to an easy chair, then turns and leaves the room.

80. M. Terry moves up to the table where the battery is standing upright near the edge. He looks at it for a while,

81. C. then jumps into the easy chair and sniffs at the battery which has a faint resemblance in shape and size to a nice fair-sized pre-war bone. Suddenly the dog is seized by an idea. Guiltily he looks round the room. Nobody there, the door to the garden is open. Terry takes the battery in his mouth,

82. M. jumps down from the chair, runs through the door,

83. L. and down the street.

84. M. He arrives at the butcher's

(Continued at foot of opposite page)



Not only do the posts assist the composition by supplying foreground interest, but they also help to enhance the confined and straitened nature of the scene.



This is the concluding instalment of the article published last month describing a highly original and extraordinarily effective method—secured by filters—of making titles change colour. A complete film of changing colour patterns could also be produced.

COLOUR TITLES

*That Will Make a Disney Out of
Every Amateur* (With Disney's
imagination)
By S. BOYLE



Mr. A. J. Bromley, chairman of the London Amateur Film Club, editing a film for showing to the troops and evacuees, a service which this club has willingly provided for months past.

IF a white paper with a blue design is first filmed, then faded out and faded in again with a red filter over the lens, the film when screened will show a blue design on a white ground which subtly changes to a black design on a red ground.

Some of these effects are so beautiful in themselves that it is possible to make an entire film consisting only of colour changes. The writer's experience has shown that such a film will hold the enthusiastic attention of the audience.

For those who desire to achieve the limit of spectacular effect, a combination of carefully designed wipes, used in conjunction with patterned grounds of constantly changing colour, is recommended. A detailed explanation of this procedure is both lengthy and necessarily a

little involved, but it can be briefly outlined as follows: a patterned paper is made to change colour several times as described above and then, while maintaining the changing colours, a set of "positive" wipe masks is placed over the background until eventually the background is entirely removed.

The film is then wound back, the background is changed and filming is restarted, using the corresponding set of "negative" wipe masks and maintaining colour changing on the new background until it is fully "wiped in." It is hoped shortly to give some advice on the preparation of wipes.

(Continued on next page)

shop. Putting his front legs on the shop-window-ledge he looks into the shop, still holding the battery in his teeth.

85. L. The shop is empty except for the butcher, who is idling behind the counter. Now the dog has caught his attention.

86. M. He approaches the window in order to see what Terry holds in his mouth.

87. C. He peeps attentively through the window at the dog. Suddenly he starts: a battery!

88. M. He moves quickly to the door.

89. M. The shop seen from the street. The butcher appears in the door, while Terry has left his observation post with the seeming intention of continuing his walk. Paying no attention to the butcher, he passes him with the battery in his mouth.

90. C. The butcher calls the dog,

91. M. but Terry does not seem to hear. The butcher calls again:

92. T. "Terry, old boy! Come here for a moment!"

93. M. Now Terry stops and turns round. The butcher beckons him and disappears in the shop. Terry follows him slowly.

94. M. Inside the shop. The butcher is bending down behind the counter. Terry stands expectantly in front of it. The butcher has found what he wanted and shows Terry a bone, but it is rather a small one.

A War, A Dog, A Bone

(Continued from opposite page)

95. C. Terry looks at it in disgust and turns round as if to leave.

96. C. The butcher signals: wait a minute! He dives again behind the counter and this time produces a bone of quite a fair size.

97. C. But Terry does not seem impressed. He stands there without moving an inch.

98. L. With a sigh the butcher dives down once more and now holds a really beautiful large bone in his hand. Terry drops the battery and barks excited approval.

99. M. The butcher comes round to where the dog stands, bends down

100. C. and exchanges the battery on the floor for the bone. Terry picks the bone up,

101. L. and off he runs through the door and out into the street.

Fade out.

Fade in.

102. M. Drawing room. Terry lies next to the easy chair,

103. C. holding the bone between his paws.

104. L. The door opens and master and mistress enter the room. They walk over to the easy chairs and sit down.

105. M. The lady takes her knitting up

106. M. and the master is just opening his paper when his eye glances on the small table on which he had placed the battery. He looks surprised, glances round the room, gets up, searches through the folds of his easy chair, and then asks his wife:

107. T. "Where's the battery I brought along with me?"

108. C. Terry stops gnawing at the bone and pricks up his ears. Then he pushes the bone with his nose carefully under the seat of the chair.

109. C. The lady looks up:

110. T. "A battery! I bet you left it as usual in the bus."

111. C. Terry beats the floor guiltily with his tail.

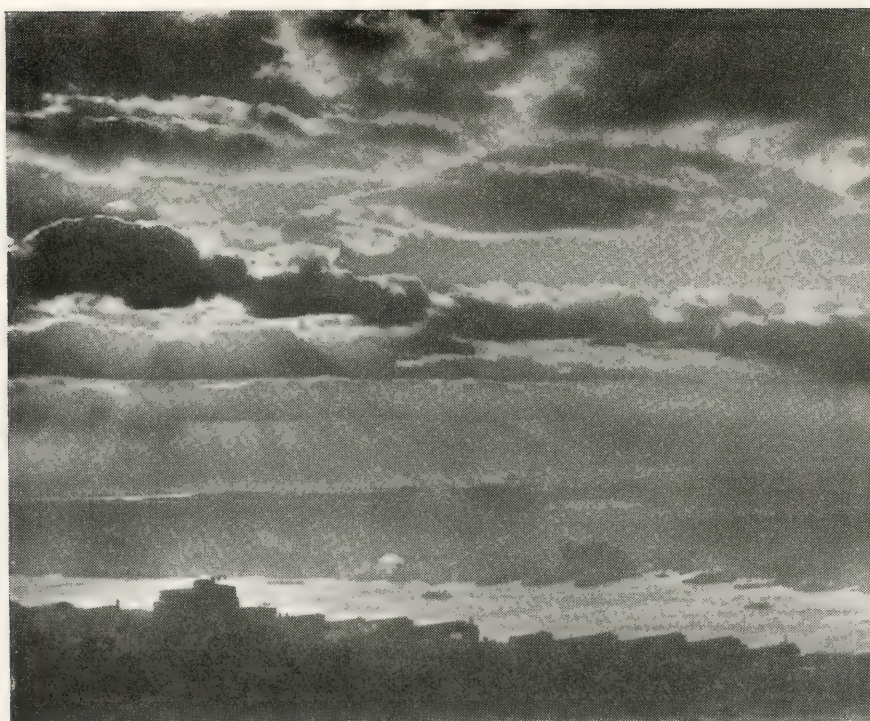
112. M. The master settles down again, opening his paper, and mumbling:

113. T. "Strange. — — — I could have sworn . . ."

114. L. He and his wife concentrate on their knitting and reading.

115. C. The dog shoves his nose under the chair, drags the bone out again, and starts to enjoy carefree the ill-gotten luxury.

The End.



The procedure for obtaining letters which change colour on a background which also changes colour is fairly simple. It is necessary, of course, to arrange that the words and background are never the same colour at once or the words would be invisible. Celluloids on registration pins are used as in cartoon work and the letters are painted by hand: stencils may be used, however, by those inexpert with the brush.

The letters are "shot" first, using white painted letters on celluloid with black velvet underneath, as previously described, and colours are obtained by interchange of filters as before. The celluloid is then changed for the one with black letters, the background is changed to either a plain one or one with a pattern, the camera is wound back and the second shooting for the background is started.

Papers of different pattern can be used with and without filters, and even colour wipes can be made. The scope is almost unlimited. If expanding or contracting letters are required it is necessary to make two sets of celluloids, one with black and the other with white letters, No. 1 of each set having the normal size of letters, No. 2 letters a little bigger and so on, until the desired maximum size is reached.

Peg Bars

If it is attempted to expand the letters by progressively decreasing the camera easel distance, the field of the background is progressively decreased and this is not always wanted. When this method is used, however, it is most important to see that the distance between the camera and the easel is the same for a given frame when the second shooting is being done for the background with the black letters in position.

Reference has been made to peg bars and single picture cameras. A few words about these items, and also on calibrated resistances and exposure determination, may be helpful. A peg bar is an extremely useful article,

The clouds are the justification for this shot, but even so Nature must often be helped out with artifice—in this case by the judicious use of filters.

COLOUR

(Continued from previous page)

quite easy to make. It consists of a strip of metal having two metal studs fixed to it.

To make one it is first necessary to obtain an ordinary two hole office punch, and with it punch two holes in a piece of stout paper. It is necessary to do this with care because, if the paper is allowed to buckle during the punching operation, the distance between the punched holes will be greater than the distance between the punches on the two hole punch, and, since this punched paper is to be used as a template, inaccuracy would result.

A piece of metal—say brass, because it is easy to work—is next obtained; its size is really governed by the distance between the punches on the two hole punch. Assuming that the punches are six inches apart, the metal strip could be $8" \times \frac{3}{4}" \times \frac{1}{8}"$ thick. The punched paper is then placed over the metal strip and the position and size of the holes are marked on the metal.

Holes of a size equal to the punch holes are then drilled in the metal and a round stud about $\frac{3}{4}"$ long is driven into each of the two holes. The work should be done with great care as, obviously, the accuracy of registration of celluloids depends on the accuracy of the peg bar. Those expert in soldering might find it easier to solder the pegs in position. When finished, the peg bar is affixed to the easel by means of wood screws.

Shutter Speed

A single picture camera is, of course, one which takes one frame for each revolution of the crank handle. Such cameras are extremely useful for trick work of all sorts, but it is nearly always necessary that the camera should be driven by an electric motor operating through a reduction gear. Although this is not difficult to arrange, it is rather expensive, and a less convenient method will generally have to be used.

Many cameras make 8 exposures for one crank revolution, and the crank position for each of the 8 full open shutter positions can be marked on the side of the camera body. If a photographic shutter is then mounted in front of the normal cine lens, we have in effect, a single picture camera. Its operation is simple.

The shutter is set to a predetermined speed and left closed; the crank is moved until it coincides with one of the marks previously made on the camera body to indicate that the cine shutter is full open. With the subject on the easel, properly illuminated, an exposure is then made with the photographic shutter.

The crank handle is then moved on to the next position, and a further exposure is made with the photographic

CHANGE TITLES

shutter. Alterations to the subject are made, as necessary, between exposures.

Although this method may seem laborious, it is really very efficient and the results obtained well repay for the trouble taken. There are a few things which must be watched carefully. One must remember to move on the crank handle after each exposure, or one frame would receive two exposures, and one must remember to make any alteration to the subject after an exposure, if such alteration is required.

The best plan is to work in a definite sequence which, when once decided upon, is never altered. Another important point is to use a photographic shutter which gives uniform exposures. Some shutters don't. A shutter is easily tested by filming a piece of white card on black and white film, developing it, and inspecting the frames for evenness of density; any variation of shutter speed which is likely to matter is very obvious.

On some shutters the speed setting device is liable to work slowly round with the vibration caused by successive exposures. This must be watched for and, if necessary,



A scene from "Behold Our Leader," a political extravaganza just completed by the Planet A.F.S. It records with much wit what happens when a dictatorship is established in England, the dictator being a tramp exploited by the party leaders.

prevented by fixing the device by means of a small wedge or by the use of adhesive tape. Animation, with such apparatus, is extremely easy.

With felt or metal letters, it is only necessary to move each letter, say about one-eighth to one quarter of an inch, between each exposure, and the screen effect is quite spectacular. To make an animated title in which a number of letters first appear in disorder, and then arrange themselves into intelligible words, the letters required to make the necessary words are scattered over the easel, taking care that they are all within the camera field, and each letter is moved between each exposure towards its final ordered position. Better still, film in reverse, so that the title is first set-up upside down, and the letters then moved.

Unfortunately it is not possible to give exact information about the exposure required for this sort of work. So many factors enter into it—really practical ones

which may be worth mentioning. Different lenses, for instance, vary greatly in the amount of light which is passed at a given aperture; one lens

may have a large number of glasses—another just a few. This is not a theoretical matter, but a really practical one.

Then the aperture markings on lenses are not always strictly accurate; it should be remembered that the iris of a cine lens is very small and very small variations in the size of the iris opening make a big difference in stop value. Sometimes, if there is play between the iris leaves and the iris adjusting ring, the actual size of the stop depends upon whether the iris has been closed down from a larger aperture or opened up from a smaller one.

Suggested Exposure

The lamps used for illuminating the easel may be slightly over-run or under-run, and this makes an appreciable difference to exposure. Supply voltages are generally only nominal.

However, once the correct exposure has been found it should remain constant. The writer uses ordinary domestic 100 watt coiled-coil lamps in reflectors, two on either side of the easel; a space of about 2 inches separates the lamps, and their height above the easel surface (the easel is a horizontal one, as this makes animation easier) is twelve inches. Each pair of lamps is 15 inches from the centre line measured horizontally. The lamps are rated at 250 volts, the average supply pressure is 240 volts, and the exposure required for Kodachrome A at $f/11$ is half a second.

It has been suggested earlier that a logarithmically calibrated resistance should be used to dim the lights for the making of fades and mixes. A good fade should look like a very gently sloping photographic wedge when the film is examined in the hand. If, in making a fade, the first frame received full exposure, the next a little less by dimming the lights with a certain amount of resistance, and the third still less by dimming the lights with twice the amount of resistance and the fourth by having three times the resistance, the resulting density from frame to frame would be in jumps.

The Resistance

The amount of resistance is therefore decreased logarithmically as this, although not theoretically perfect, gives satisfactory results in practice. The logarithmic scale used is to the base 10. The resistance used should be such that, when it is all in circuit, the lighting is reduced to a dim red glow. The actual value of the resistance will depend on the wattage of the lamps.

The resistance should be capable of carrying the current without overheating; the co-operation of an electrically minded friend will be of assistance here, or, perhaps better still, advice should be obtained from the electrical firm who supply the resistance.

The fixing of the log scale to the resistance is usually easy; a brass pointer is fixed to the insulated handle of the slider in such a way that it will move along the calibrated strip which can be fixed to the body of the resistance. The strip can be cut from long calibrated paper which can be obtained from most shops which supply schools with stationery.

The Plot Thickens

A Film About War-Time Espionage

THE exchange of correspondence last month between a reader and ourselves, regarding his film, seems to have created some interest. To put the matter succinctly and with originality, it makes a change from the usual form of review; so, adhering to an inflexible rule of filmdom, the new form having met with success, we repeat it.

We hope it will not be thought that we are always wrangling with readers who submit films for review. It is seldom that readers question our comments on their work, but when they do so it is no doubt salutary both for them and us. In the main—as the extracts on another page indicate—their letters express agreement with our views. Below we cite an instance in which the reader is right in many particulars—and we are wrong, although we must plead that the makers of the film led us into the error.

It all begins way back in January, 1938, when the Film Producing Section of the B.T.H. Recreation Club sent us a copy of a scenario for comment. A few weeks ago the film, "Secret Enemy" (9.5 mm., 4 reels) came to us for review. Many of the situations appeared vaguely familiar, and then we remembered that we had seen the script. Had anybody been there at the time, they would doubtless have commented on the fact that we had suddenly paled and appeared to be uneasy in our mind. For we were thinking that if we had passed no adverse comment on some of those situations, the blame for their failure would rest on us; and how could we with justice point out errors when we had in effect originally condoned them?

We promptly turned up the copy of our notes on the script, and misgiving gave place to mild annoyance. We had urged that those situations be altered. We remembered we had spent the best part of an evening on that script. Some of our suggestions had been accepted, but most hadn't. Waste of time, we thought. Why on earth, we asked ourselves heatedly, do people ask advice if they do not propose to accept it?

Then we simmered down and tried to put ourselves in the producers' place. It occurred to us that, in all probability, they did not implement our suggestions because they quite honestly disagreed with them. And that, after all, is the best possible reason for not doing so. As their letter which is the subject of these notes shows, this was in fact the case. But we could have wished they had notified us of their objections *before* they made the film.

A Vivid First Reel

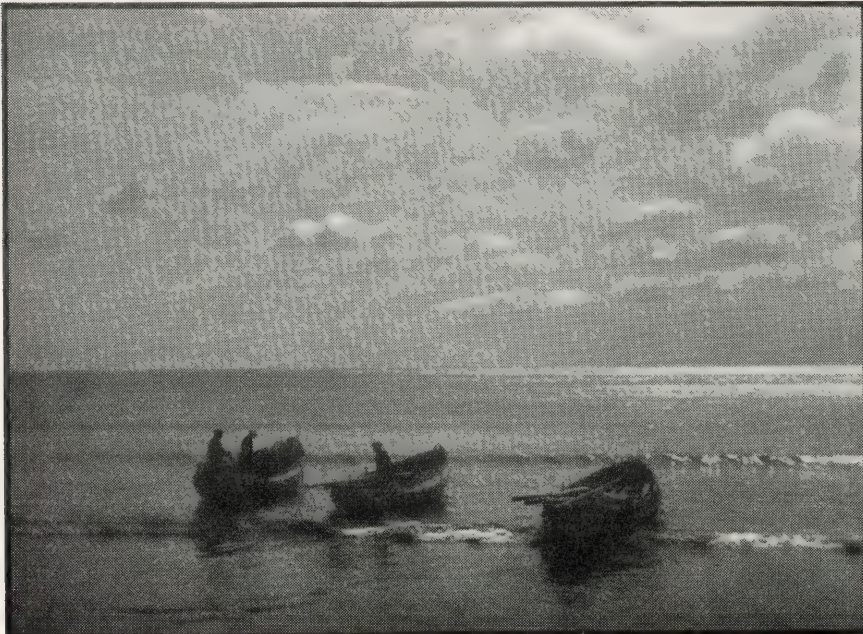
"Secret Enemy" deals with a secret agent, in the service of a mythical foreign power, who plans to assassinate the British prime minister. His plans miscarry because the messages he receives from his short-wave station are discovered by a radio enthusiast, and because he himself loses his nerve and is fittingly blown up by his own bomb.

Had the promise of the first reel been sustained, the film might well have been in the running for consideration for the "Ten Best." Cutting and camerawork in this reel are first-rate. The shots are short, varied and compelling. There are vivid air raid scenes, interesting

glimpses inside what appears to be an armament factory, and well-lit close-ups of the prime minister (a convincing type) speaking in the House of Commons. Actually, of course, he was never there at all, but exteriors of the Houses establish the location.

Then intercut with these are well-chosen library shots of what seems to be the German occupation of either Czecho-Slovakia or Austria. Newspaper posters about the Geobanian war were specially prepared and the whole put together with very considerable skill and imagination. There is economy of effect throughout and the montage has pace and point.

In a few places, however, cutting



Note that the horizon is nearly two-thirds of the way down the picture. It should never cut it in half, for to do so would effectively divide its interest.

REVIEWED

Amateur films of any size, subject and gauge may be sent for review. Those that reach a reasonable standard of merit are awarded a Leader. A special animated Leader is given for films that are particularly noteworthy. Please do not send us your film until we ask you to, but first advise us that you have a film you wish reviewed, stating its length and gauge. We will then reserve a date for screening it, and inform you accordingly. Please do not forget to enclose the cost of return postage with your film. Address: The Editor, "Amateur Cine World," 300/304, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

and camerawork show a straining after effect, noticeably so in one sequence in which the wife of the spy, Ashton, tells him that two of their friends are going to spend the Sunday afternoon with them. The angles suggest a studied mysteriousness and tenseness that are not warranted by the context. One feels that something direful and forbidding is going to happen but nothing more dreadful transpires than an afternoon on the river.

The angles are such that they give supernatural impressions of the two people, making them loom large on the screen and overpowering their surroundings. For such an ordinary situation, normal viewpoints are necessary.

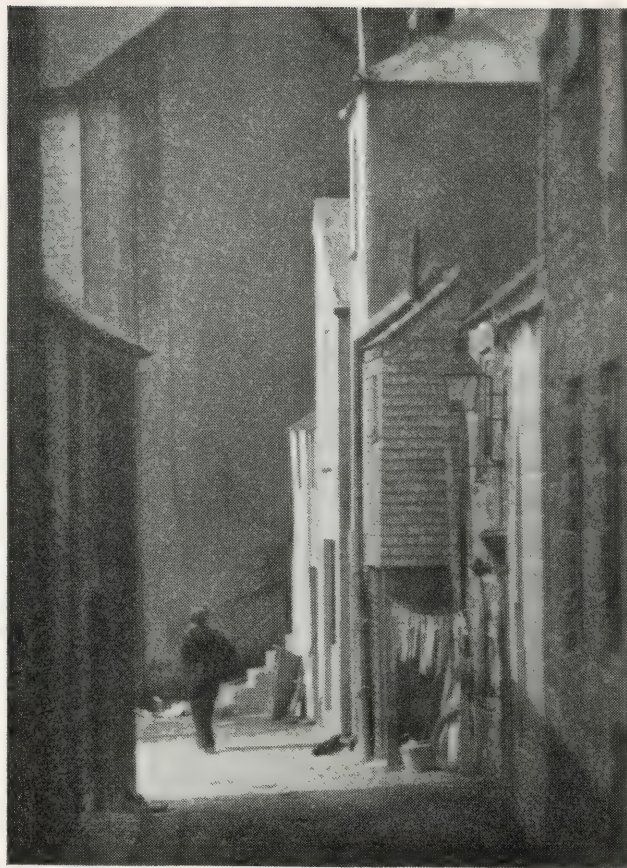
There is a swift-moving, imaginative sequence showing the transmission of a message from the enemy state to Ashton: past the sentries, hurrying feet, an attache case surreptitiously passing from hand to hand, signs and countersigns, warning shadows, until the messenger lands from a small boat on a desolate part of the coast. But it is a pity that, in one shot, other craft are plainly discernible for a few seconds. The illusion, so successfully built up, of stealth and secrecy, is thereby destroyed. This shot should be trimmed.

A sub-title in the first reel reads: "Charteris, chief designer, was Ashton's friend." This is rather naive and reminiscent of the early days of the cinema, the days of "Came the dawn" and "meanwhile." Sufficient that the audience should be told that Charteris is the chief designer. That he is also Ashton's friend is evident from the film.

The plot thickens in reel 2 but, for us at any rate, it also departs from credibility. As we mentioned in our criticism of the script, the basic idea—radio communication between enemy state and spy appears to be too far-fetched. "Surely this broadcasting of messages is the most dangerous and improbable way of communicating them that could be devised? How easy it is for anyone to do so is shown by the fact that the amateurs in your story are able to do so."

Then again, one wonders: would Ashton have carried on his espionage work (and made such a mystery of it) in his own lounge, under the eyes of his wife. A sub-title tells us that she half suspects. One feels that one hour with Ashton would have convinced anybody of the truth. His furtive, "but, soft, we are observed" looks would surely raise suspicion.

During a period of anxious waiting for the instructions, Ashton and wife visit Charteris and wife for an evening of cards. Ashton's behaviour is quite lunatic. He glowers and frowns, smokes innumerable cigarettes, almost has a fight with his host and generally acts like a man possessed. The effect is unfortunately made comic by the jerky, exaggerated movements and the heroics,



A film of your local town must include shots of the byways, as well as of the show places.

again reminiscent of very early film dramas. But the camerawork is good.

The intention of showing how frayed are his nerves is too obvious.

People do not act that way so suddenly—at least, people of Ashton's type do not. The psychology is wrong. Ashton is a secret agent. Presumably, therefore, he has some nerve. Why should he crack up so completely in so short a time? The episode does not ring true.

Then when the Ashtons leave, they fall foul of a comic policeman who is knocked over by their car. The business is too farcical for a subject of this kind. Comedy as light relief is desirable, but not farce. It does not accord with drama. In fairness it should be added that the incident dovetails into the plot, for Ashton is fined for assault or obstruction or something of the kind, the newspaper report of which suggests to his foreign employers that his nerve and caution are going and that they must therefore quickly despatch their business with him.

More Restraint Desirable

In reel 3 he declines still further. There is the familiar hand-tapping, the swilling of whisky—the stock shots, in fact. More restraint would have been desirable. Besides as far as he knows, no one suspects him. We realise, of course, that something is pending, but we are not quite sure what.

The climax is good. The prime minister goes to the station to catch the train which should take him on his last journey. We see the dignified old gentleman,

(Continued on next page)



supported by his suite and accompanied by officers, walking down the platform, while Press photographers dart hither and thither taking flashlight shots. The station is a real one; and the actors and technical crew are to be congratulated on their courage in filming in public like this. Certainly the sequence bears the stamp of reality.

Even more courageous is the pursuit of Ashton through crowded streets. He actually holds up the crowd with a revolver before he makes his escape. Most of the passers-by don't know what to make of it all. Their uncertainty and bewilderment contribute to the authenticity of the episode. But we are not quite sure why Ashton is being pursued, for it is not clear that he himself is to throw the bomb.

The long expanse of sand is relieved by the figures on horse-back, to which the eye is automatically attracted.

The Authors Reply

To sum up, the film is ably produced technically and the action is brisk and vivid. Its faults lie largely in the plot. The above, then, is the major part of the criticism we sent the producers, who returned the following letter, signed by the director, assistant director and producer.

They would like to make it clear that it is not necessarily the opinion of the B.T.H. R.C. Film Producing Section.

"We are very pleased to have your criticism and any disappointment we felt that the film was not acceptable for consideration for the 'Ten Best of 1939' was compensated for by your generous praise of reel 1. We are most encouraged to think that the second film—and first feature length film—that this group has attempted, should be considered so favourably. The reaction of our audiences and the local and evening press appeared to substantiate this opinion of yours. We venture to point out, though, that if the plot was as weak as you suggest we should not have been so successful as to have capacity

Authentic Settings in Amateur Film

(Continued from previous page)

audiences totalling 1,400 and paying for their seats for four successive days."

We congratulate the club on getting so large a paying audience but do not feel that its size can be any real indication of the qualities of the film plot. We can imagine that our correspondents, like ourselves, have sometimes wished they had had the nerve to ask for their money back at the local cinema. But we hasten to add that the Rugby audience would not have justification for any such action. The film is of local interest, part of it is taken in a large local factory and it has a topical story.

"In general, regarding certain parts of the plot which appeared obscure and defective, we hold the opinion that the audience should be given scope for using their imagination and filling in certain apparent gaps. On due consideration it will be found that every incident tallies with other sequences.

In your first paragraph you object to the idea of radio communication between foreign state and spy. Some of us knew when the script was written that this was being done, but we had no proof to hand. Since then, a number of short wave sets which had been operating for a long time were confiscated, notably in France, Germany and Ireland, for being used for that very purpose. The facts have been reported in the press and curiously enough a case occurred this week and I enclose 'The Daily Telegraph's' report. We agree there is a certain danger attached to this method; but I think you will admit there would be few crime stories, if villainous plans never went wrong, and no method is perfect."

We do agree. Indeed, there would be no crime stories at all if villainous plans never went wrong. And we agree that we were in error in supposing that transmission of secret plans by shortwave would be impossible in war. We should, however, think it would be impossible in this country, at any rate carried on as openly as in this film.

Short-Wave Transmission

"(1) The Geobanian Government and Ashton used a registered call sign of an English amateur to divert the suspicion of the British Government official checking station, whose main job is generally to check frequency.

(2) Short-wave amateurs are permitted to use code so the combination of code and official call sign would not have interested the British station check.

(3) As a precaution only routine messages were sent by radio. The important ones were conveyed by hand. It was not thought necessary to complicate the plot by explaining this but it can be deduced from what happened in the film.

Frankly we don't think your ideas on this point line up with the evidence of facts."

We did not appreciate (1) and did not know about (2). Now if only the producers had been at pains to explain these things clearly in the film to the average person who knows practically nothing about short-wave radio transmission, they would at once have obviated criticism. Working at B.T.H. they probably take them for granted, as possibly would most audiences drawn from the works. The story, if not the treatment, is, then,

(Continued on page 513)

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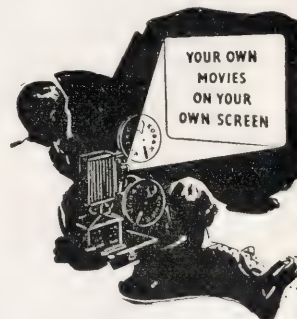
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Readers' Films Reviewed

(Continued from page 510)

credible. It appeared fantastic to us because we are plumb ignorant about such matters. The producers have given us too much scope for using our imagination and 'filling in certain apparent gaps.' An audience must be allowed to think for itself, certainly, but where technical affairs which have direct bearing on the plot are concerned, they must spoon-feed it.

"... the sub-title 'Charteris, chief designer, was Ashton's friend.' This is rather naive and reminiscent of the early days of the cinema..." There was considerable controversy about this title among us and the winner of it defends his choice as follows:—

'The idea was to emphasise the regard Ashton and Charteris had for each other in order to make understandable the reluctance later manifested by the latter to call in the police. This method of using a title to back up a following pictorial shot or sequence appeared in quite a number of the later silent films and was used, I think, very effectively in 'Battleship Potemkin' when a shot of rifles held by a hesitant firing party was preceded by a title reading 'The rifles waver...' Pudovkin in 'Film Technique' says 'the continuity title is only good... if it shortly explains essentials... and prepares for clearer apprehension of the subsequent action.'

'There is the question of what the same authority call the 'rhythmic significance' of titles and the brief wording of this title was deliberately chosen in order that it should blend with and strengthen the action and atmosphere of the story at the point of insertion.

'It is admitted that this sub-title seems to have an old-fashioned, naive look, but surely, in these days of sound films, any silent photoplay making use of undiluted silent film technique must, as a whole, tend to appear to be of that order.'

There is a lot of truth in the last sentence, but we feel that the writers have misread Pudovkin. The incident from the famous sequence in "Battleship Potemkin" does not appear to have any bearing on this case. "The rifles waver" is a kind of rhetorical declamation, a statement of what the audience might itself be thinking. By echoing their thoughts it reinforces them.

"Again we cross swords. The psychology is wrong. We disagree. The instance that leaps to mind to show we had the right idea is the case of Kapt.-Leut. Rintelen von Kleist of the Imperial German Navy while an agent here in the last war. His nerve cracked so completely that he gave himself up to the authorities. This officer undoubtedly had nerve, as you probably know and as his exploits testify.

"It would have been pleasing perhaps to have achieved some more original manifestation of bad nerves than '... the familiar hand-tapping, the swilling of whisky...'

"This is a silent film and you can easily bore an audience by too much restraint. You and ourselves

might appreciate the subtlety of restrained actions here, but persons less versed in film matters would probably miss it. We aimed at being entertaining among other things. And we think we conveyed the monotonous futility of Ashton's actions on that evening as simply as possible."

It is no answer to our contention that the psychology is wrong to cite the case of a secret agent who *did* lose his nerve. Doubtless secret agents have gone to pieces before and doubtless they will do so again. But if the enemy's agents will collapse with the promptitude and despatch that characterize Ashton's downfall, we shall have little to fear.

The episode does not ring true because it is exaggerated in treatment and too condensed in time. His nerve breaks too suddenly and violently. His previous demeanour has given us no hint of what to expect. We just don't believe it. We know it's play-acting.

It is quite true that an audience can be bored by too much restraint but they can be much more easily moved to cynical amusement by over-acting. By its very nature the screen exaggerates. It presents things larger than life, but at the same time it ruthlessly analyses. If the film producer under-estimates an audience's intelligence he is heading for failure.

And that incessant hand-tapping and whisky-swilling... Does it convey fear and indecision more convincingly than, say, the neurasthenic's start at the howling of a dog, at a sudden wind bellying curtains into the room, at the slowly opening door, at the shadow of a tree on a wall? Would a person unversed in film matters (puzzle: where are those persons when statistics tell us that the average baby-in-arms goes to the cinema two and a half times a week?) miss the implication of such shots?



Economy of effect—the owners have gone for a bathe—and a useful continuity link.



Part of the giant "Munchkinland" setting in "The Wizard of Oz." Judy Garland (as Dorothy) is seen with Glinda, the Good Witch, and the Munchkin midgets.

AMAZING CAMERA CRAFT

in Current Professional Releases

By H. CHEVALIER, A.R.P.S.

"THE RAINS CAME" (Myrna Loy, Tyrone Power, George Brent), dealing with the events prior to and following the razing of the city of Ranchipur by earthquake and floods, is rich in special effects. A huge setting, consisting of 24 buildings, was built inside a tank for the deluge sequences.

The earthquake is heralded by buildings rocking, shown by an interior, which suddenly lurches sideways, a large chandelier in it swinging alarmingly. The usual method adopted to produce this effect is to mount the set upon a rocker or roller platform, fastened down to a heavy under-platform by strong steel springs. When force is applied to the extended joists of the top platform—usually by hand—the springs take up the motion and the set literally quakes. The chandelier was swayed by piano wires and not by the motion of the set, to avoid any possible accident. In the second 'quake the chandelier is pulled down sideways, together with a specially rigged portion of a ceiling and prepared debris and dust. Furniture is overturned by wires.

Inside a wrecked house the water is seen rising up the stairway, with parts of huge pillars lying upon smashed furniture. Two people are trapped on the landing, when the first wall of flood water hits the house. You see the whole door forced in, hurling one of the characters

down and completely engulfing both. This set, too, was built in a tank. Dummies were substituted for the two persons before the wire release was pulled, allowing the truly amazing wall of water to rush into the set.

When the dam bursts, the centre of the concrete wall falls in one solid piece. The water rushes through—there are 2,000,000 gallons of it—and wrecks the set of 24 buildings in the space of a minute or so. On the screen it appears longer, but most of these scenes were taken at high camera speeds. 14 cameras recorded the deluge, all running at different speeds and the shots from each intercut. Two million gallons is certainly a lot of water, but as most of it has to be released down wide chutes, about 3ft. 6in. wide, from a height of about 60ft., it is quite a small volume for the job in hand.

A word about "breakaway" sets, of which there are several in the film. One is the huge temple that crashes down on the natives during the earthquake. Such sets are models, usually quite large, made from plaster, built up section by section, each connected to a wire. A high speed camera (about 5 times normal) is used, and the scene shot in a few seconds by first rocking the model, then pulling at the wires, the lower ones first, followed by those attached to the top.

This effect is combined with foreground action by the

travelling matt process. In the temple scene you may notice that at the top of the steps on the right hand side (at the screen edge) one figure is not properly matted in.

In several of the scenes bricks and debris rain down on people. These bricks are now usually made of bread. Manufactured by a company called Helms Bakery, who specialise in this work, they are prepared from pumper-nickle dough. They are dark brown, very rough textured and photographically exactly similar to real bricks. Walls that topple over are laid like ordinary walls, but using bread bricks and a mortar consisting of lemon cream.

Rain is seen in almost all its forms in the film, from the torrential downpour to a gentle trickle down the window. But it is manufactured in only one way. Overhead sprinkler pipes are banked across the setting and the water delivered at high pressure, about 60 lbs. ; each pump delivers about 750 gallons per minute. Each individual pipe, having perhaps a dozen sprinklers, is controlled from the main distributor by a stop cock, to enable the amount delivered by each section to be equalised.

40 Inches of Rain A Day

On these large sets the rainfall required would be 10,000 gallons per shooting minute, or—in normal terms—about 40 ins. of rainfall per day. To prevent cold, actors working in rain scenes are given an application of Nujol, a commercial medicinal liquid paraffin.

Contrasted with these technical highlights are the more normal straight scenes, containing some exceptionally good low-key lighting, particularly in the palace settings. Many of the semi-close shots are gems of lighting, noticeably so in the hospital scenes, Arthur Miller producing a soft effect without resorting to soft focus.

In "The Light That Failed" (Ronald Colman, Walter Huston) the settings are not lavish, but the shots are beautifully composed. A considerable portion of the film consists of interiors, chiefly a painter's studio, a static background requiring a sure knowledge of the use of camera angles to prevent monotony. Lighting,



The rubber plastic trees in the apple orchard scene ("The Wizard of Oz"). Each tree contains a man, the branches being suspended by fine wires attached to the studio roof.

One of the flying monkeys in "The Wizard of Oz." Details concerning its manipulation are given in this article.



too, presents difficulties, due to the altering of the positions of shadows as the sun moves round.

The lighting adapted for the studio is fairly low positioned, H.I. arc backlighting with exceedingly flat front lighting, using either 5 Kw. or 60 amp. arc units. The general illumination, coming from the left with modelling light directly behind and slightly off centre from the camera, is a method not generally adopted for this type of scene.

London Films, at the height of their activity two years ago, made a film called "Over the Moon" (Merle Oberon, Rex Harrison) in Technicolor. Harry Stradling, known as "Lightning Steve" (he is one of the fastest workers we have), was cameraman, and brought into "Technicoloring" his crisp, virile, low-contrast lighting methods. At the time it was considered unusual and had the film been released in the ordinary way, the method would have considerably influenced colour technique. Now it can only be contrasted against that devised by George Perinal and Tony Guidio in more recent films.

A Remarkable Fantasy

You must certainly see that remarkable fantasy, "Wizard of Oz." 3,210 costumes were designed and made for it and 65 fantastic settings built. As but one instance of the elaborate care taken one can cite the poppy field covering 1½ acres. Twenty men worked a week sticking the 2ft. wire stems of the 40,000 poppies in the grass. Emerald City, the largest interior set, was painted in twelve iridescent shades of green ; most of the material used was synthetic glass.

Used for the first time is a new camera crane, with a new underslung camera mounting, nicknamed the "sloth." This attaches to the lower side of the crane, hanging below the boom, instead of mounted above, as normally, allowing the camera to be operated within 6 inches of the floor or lifted to 16ft. The crane arm or boom, 9ft. in length, carries the underslung mounting, and the entire arm can be raised or lowered bodily by means of a motor-driven helical hoist. The boom

(Continued on next page)



Secrets of "The Wizard of Oz"

(Continued from previous page)

An exceptionally good example of high-intensity front and back lighting in a studio scene from "The Light that Failed." This film reviewed in this article, is notable for its beautifully composed shots.

rotates freely through a full 360 degrees circle. The tilt head also moves through a 360 degrees vertical circle, and is operated by an independent control.

This universal camera carriage contributes largely to the amazing mobility of the camera work; there is a constant smooth movement on the screen that imparts a peculiar sense of rhythm and life to even the smallest shot, while the ease and speed of movement from close to long shot is enthralling. This is particularly noticeable in the scene where Judy Garland sings "Over the Rainbow"—an amazing piece of camera craft.

Make-up presented a difficult problem. Jack Dawn, head of the make-up department of M-G-M, perfected a new mould for plastic face inlays. A special alloy is fitted to the face and, by means of a secret process, plastic material is moulded over it, eliminating the plaster casts formerly used.

Elaborate Make-Up

Jack Haley, as the "tin woodsman," needed two hours to get into his forty pounds of make-up and costuming. Prior to painting his face with silver, a heavy layer of wax was smoothed on to protect the skin, then powdered and dusted with silver powder composed of finely divided real silver grains (at a cost of about three shillings per application!). A special plastic button-like tip was added to his nose and a heavy but highly flexible lower jaw to give the impression that it was made of tin. His costume weighed about 38 lbs., and was not really constructed from tin—this would be too heavy—but from light alloy sheet, with rubber gloves covering his hands and a "tin" funnel on his head.

In the black and white sequences the special effects commence with a dust spout or cyclone. This is a remarkable piece of work. As it approaches the farm, pull-away bushes, breakaway trees and doors skyriding on piano wires heighten the effect, aided with a blast from several wind machines. Then the house is whirled up bodily and we are inside the dust spout. Here by clever back projection and double exposure, Judy Garland sees through the open window, first, an old lady busy knitting, seated in an armchair, then two men rowing a boat, a cow lowing, and then a wicked old lady on her bicycle who turns into a witch on a broomstick. A crash, and the house has landed on something firm—and as Dorothy in a black and

white setting opens the door, the Technicolor setting of Munchkinland is seen through the doorway.

This black and white to colour change in the one shot is something new, and imparts a wonderful sense of fantasy: a girl in drab clothes opening a door, revealing Munchkinland in all its colourful beauty. Unfortunately, it is marred by a greenish tint in the Technicolor film that spoils the black and white intermediate shot, but it is still a good and novel trick.

The fairy appears in a soap bubble floating through the air. Soap bubbles change colour with iridescent effects, and this was obtained by matte printing. The mask was made by photographing a black ball and intensifying the negative until it was perfectly opaque. This, in the printer, left white spaces. These were then painstakingly tinted by hand, and when the final negative was obtained, Glinda was double-exposed into position. Actually, a fade-out of the bubble overlapped with a fade-in of her standing in correct perspective position—an excellent piece of work.

One of the characters is the "Horse of a Different Colour." First it is white, then red, then yellow and finally purple. Three horses

were used in the sequence, tinted with a harmless dye made from a table jelly.

Creating the flying monkeys was no mean task. These, men in fantastic monkey skins, had large wings on their backs, that beat up and down exactly like bird wings. Each of the fifty monkeys had a special motor strapped under his costume, and wings, fashioned after those of the South African condor, largest bird in existence, attached. Each flying monkey needed a "monkey pilot" who operated the flying wires in exactly the same manner as is done for the fairy in "Peter Pan."

No branch of modern special effects has received less publicity than matte shots, yet they hold an important place in this type of picture. Instead of the old time method of hanging the actual painted glass on the set, and photographing both together, necessitating careful alignment, the two parts of the scene are photographed separately with complementary areas matted out. Both parts are photographed on the same negative, though in separate exposures.

Matte Shots

When the studio shot is made, a member of the effects staff is on the actual setting to prepare the matte (actually this word means 'mask'). A soft blend is preferable, so the matte is placed close to the lens, which gives a woolly or hazy black edge around the part seen through the mask by the camera. For these shots the camera on the set is tied down rigidly, and between 200-250 ft. of test negative is exposed before the actual take.

A small section of this test is developed and a still enlargement made (in this case, presumably a 10" x 8" cut Kodachrome enlargement was made as a colour guide) to guide the matte artist in producing his painting. In some cases, this enlargement is projected on to the underside of the glass painting, ensuring greater accuracy of tone and rendition.

Finally the sound. In some scenes the mighty Oz speaks with a nerve-shattering voice, with terrifying echoes, an awe-inspiring sound effect produced by re-directing Frank Morgan's voice down a concrete tunnel a quarter of a mile long and re-recording it after it had bounded back and forth. In all, 2,000 separate sound effects were worked out for the picture.



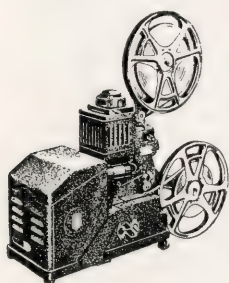
Low-contrast lighting in scene from "Over the Moon," Technicolor film. Harry Stradling was cameraman.

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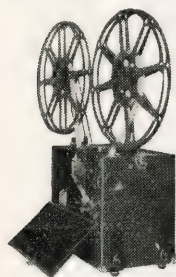


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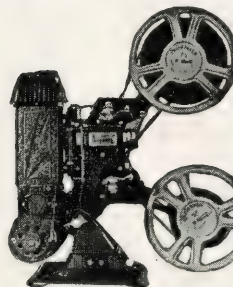
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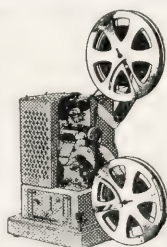


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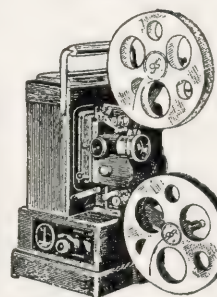
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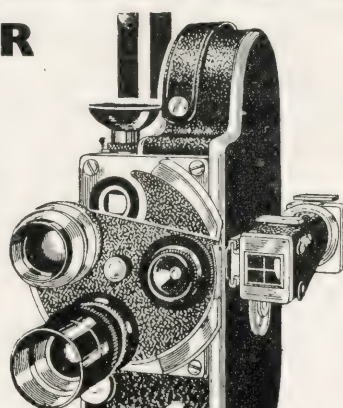
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The Reader Answers Back

Sir,—Your correspondents, E. W. and M. M. Robson, authors of the book, "The Film Answers Back," write with the "intellectualism run riot" of which they accuse everybody and everything except themselves. They show the persistence in error and the cocksureness of their own correctness of two very spoiled children. Their ideas are unsound, their deductions from them are inconsequential, and they express their ideas and their findings either with exaggeration or inexactness.

With respect to the film in general and "Professor Mamlock" in particular, the writers say that "in nearly every Soviet film . . . the method of presentation is literary, or word-conditioned." They argue thus because "Professor Mamlock" ends with a passionate address by the Professor. Even the Robsons must admit that owing to the nature of the talking-film there is necessarily "talk" in a talking-film.

"Word-Conditioned"

That criticism has been levelled against talking-films ever since their appearance, and if that argument were a valid one, then every talking-film ever made would be attacked as "word-conditioned." Furthermore, Mamlock, in his last speech, does not speak to or look at the audience. It is obvious to the least alert member of the audience that he is addressing the Nazis below the balcony and not the audience. Even the illiterate Russians are not so stupid as to think the contrary.

Again, since when has it been "highly reprehensible" to put the idea of suicide into a film. Some of the finest film-dramas have been based upon or ended with that idea. But has everyone who saw those films committed suicide? If so, why haven't the Robsons?

The Robsons are surrealistically critical when they assert that "the whole picture (and every other Russian film) stresses the negative and despairing." This thesis is based on the "shocking naivete" of the illegal activities of the anti-Nazi workers, and the death of the central figure in several Soviet films. It would be desirable for the Robsons to enumerate what alternative methods to those used by the German workers they themselves would adopt under similar circumstances.

Martyred Heroes

This may be a shock to their finicky objections, but these are the methods and the only possible methods at the disposal of any revolutionary party; the latter would be glad to learn from the arcana of the Robsons better and more efficacious methods of disseminating their anti-Nazi propaganda.

According to what method of thinking does the death of the protagonist of a film teach that "it is useless to put up a fight, and that suicide is the best way out"? Have not all great historical and social movements had their martyred heroes? If the Robsons assume that a nation which seeks

Correspondence for publication is always welcomed, but the Editor does not necessarily endorse the views expressed.

"to relieve these episodes in its history which any other community would rather have forgotten in shame" is sunk in "the mire of self-pitying romanticism," then they have a very curious idea of shame, and a still more bizarre knowledge of their own country and the world.

According to them it is "self-pitying romanticism" for the Americans to make a film ending with the death of Lincoln; for the French to make a film ending with the death of Robespierre; for the English to make a film ending in the death of Charles I or Cromwell.

Out of this mass of unsound reasoning, they then come to this masterly conclusion. We English must avoid the mistakes of pre-Nazi Germany (not Nazi Germany, be it noticed) and socialist Russia. Recent English films have been more "reality-conscious" (?) and less "Central European" (?) "Q Planes" and "Shipyard Sally" have "social-unity in action," "Goodbye Mr. Chips!" has deep "social feeling." What all that means it is impossible to discover. "Q Planes" is a flippant, harum-scarum, well-made melodrama and nothing more. "Mr. Chips" is a well-made but completely conventional and snobbish cavalcade of a certain section of English society. That is all and no more.

The Robsons do not criticise. They stuff everything they come across into the unchanging mould of their set prejudices. If the film ever answers back in the way the Robsons say it does, then the film is and never will be more than an echoing dummy for the ventriloquial Robsons.

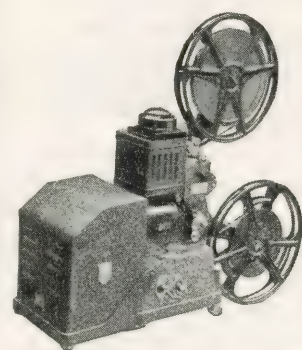
Tynnyrheol, Neath. WALTER V. THOMAS.

Sir,—The article, "The Problem of Russia," in your last issue is welcome as being a step in the right direction of recognising the cinema as at the same time an influence on and a mirror of its social, political and economic background. Nevertheless, I fear that, in this instance, the authors have failed dismally to produce anything better than a shallow argument backwards from inaccurately observed effect to alleged cause.

While I realise the danger of being dogmatic, I should say that the influence to be considered in Russian affairs is not European, but Asiatic, the important point being the holding of human life at a lower value than is our custom.

"Whether he knows it or not, the film maker is an educationalist" say your authors. (Continued on next page)

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Agfa Movex 8 , cassette loading, very silent running, S.H., list price £12 12 0. For... ..	£7 0 0
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Letters to the Editor

(Continued from previous page)

Propaganda has always been the Russians' main objective, from the days when it was necessary to educate a huge illiterate adult population and change their whole outlook. In addition, when estimating the effect a film will have on Russian audiences, it should be remembered that a new film is almost certain to be followed by detailed discussion and criticism in clubs, groups, etc., when the intended message or moral will be well driven home. This effectively squashes the argument that Mamlock's final words will encourage Russians to "go on shooting women, old men and children."

The ending is typical of Russian films. The "happy" ending is rare in them, for they are slices of life, and just as they have no clear cut beginning, so they have no conventional ending where all the loose ends are tied up neatly.

Who knows but what "Professor Mamlock" may have had an immense influence on world history—may, in fact, have been the last straw, but not in the way suggested by the authors of "The Problem of Russia"! Whalley, Nr. Blackburn D. H. O'DELL.

(We have received very many interesting letters on the subject of last month's article, "The Problem of Russia," but most had a strong political bias, and *Amateur Cine World* is not a platform for the dissemination of political views. We have filleted the two letters selected for publication but hope that even so we have been able to retain some of their pungency and forthrightness.—EDITOR.)

"GALE WARNING"

Sir,—I was amazed at Mr. X's inference (suggested in your review of his film, "Gale Warning") that so-called 'story' films receive preferential treatment at your hands. A little reading of criticisms in back numbers and a study of the lists of previous years' 'Ten Bests' will quickly disabuse him.

Mr. X contrives very nicely to condemn himself out of his own pen and by his very inconsistency. In one part of the correspondences he expresses his conviction that the making of 'natural' films from stock shots 'cannot be done,' while later he says that his failure in this object 'does not rule out the possibility of doing so.' Again, he calls his film "Gale Warning," says that

actual gale shots are not necessary, but only those leading up to them, then confesses later that the film includes some unsuccessful shots taken during a 70 m.p.h. gale.

Reading between the lines I think that Mr. X has been trapped by words, and by woolly thinking, and by the blindness which assails all of us who attempt to create. I can almost hear him saying to himself, when the idea first occurred to him, "I have some gale shots! It would be a good idea to make a film leading up to them and call it 'Gale Warning.'" Then he has gone ahead with his collecting and arranging, failing to realise that, in fact, he has never had the material to hand to enable him to achieve success.

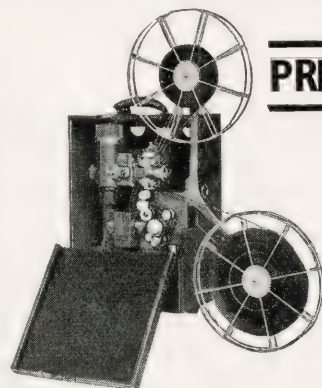
Before he has got very far his sheer absorption in the thrilling task of arranging and editing the various shots has blinded him still more and more to the incongruity of his proposed title, and he has preserved it to the last.

Words and Pictures

Mr. X will probably indignantly deny all this. He may even say with truth that he started with quite a different idea, and that the title was not decided until the last, but I am perfectly certain that at some stage in his work the word 'Gale' has caught his fancy, and that thereafter he has worked with that word in his mind as the climax of his effort.

In other words, because he *knew* his shots were taken in a gale, he has failed to realise that they do not *appear* to have been taken under such conditions. He has forgotten that the shots in a film can only speak by means of their appearance and that any intimate knowledge which the cameraman has of them will only appear on the screen if it has been introduced into the picture.

Incidentally, this is a criticism of Mr. X's ability as a cameraman. He is apparently unable, even in the presence of a 70 mile per hour gale, to secure shots which give an impression of rapid wind movement. If his knowledge of this initial stage is so limited, if he fails to know and understand the value of viewpoint, angle, composition and juxtaposition of the components in a single shot, is it to be wondered at that he fails in the much more complex task of adding these shots to each other?



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As to the human element. On what grounds does Mr. X justify his assumption that a human being is less 'natural' than a reed in a pond, or a cow? What would he think, I wonder, of a cinematographer who swore a solemn oath to exclude cows from all his shots because it is possible to control the movements and placing of cows? Yet the introduction of a human being, as a 'property' in a shot, is no more unnatural than introducing any other object. Does Mr. X exclude such man-made, man-placed objects as an old farm cart, or does such an accessory become invalid only if he wheels it into a position more favourable to his composition? Yet what is the difference between influencing the mood of a shot by placing a human being in it, and (to quote Mr. X) "waiting a month for a particular shot as is the case with 'natural' shots"?

May I suggest, therefore, Mr. X that the next time you embark on a production of this kind you look through your shots and decide what they say, ignoring what they were supposed to be when you took them. Then you can work with the material that you really have to hand, instead of the material you imagine you have to hand. And if you have an index of stock shots, do not put on it items like 'Long-shot, landscape, Cromer, taken in 70 m.p.h. gale,' but 'Long-shot, landscape, Cromer, clouds moving very slowly over sky, reeds in foreground rippling very slightly'.

Then you will not fall into the error of allowing your film to say something to you which is entirely different from the message it conveys to an unbiased observer—which latter term includes nearly all the rest of the world, some hundreds of millions of people. A silent film which has succeeded in its purpose should be readily understandable by the first person you fetch in from the street, however erudite or illiterate he may be. Hampton Hill, M'ddx. GEORGE H. SEWELL.

(Maybe Mr. Sewell is something of a stormy petrel, but he has flown higher and farther than most over the seas of amateur movie-making; indeed, he has done much to chart them. So if he appears impatient of the errors Mr. X has made, it is probably because from the height he wings his vigorous way

he is able to see all round a thing. And since Mr. X is, of course, anonymous, Mr. Sewell's biting criticism can do no harm and should do much good.—EDITOR.)

LACK OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS

Sir,—We were interested to read your notes headed "Projectors in Schools," in your January editorial. You state in the last paragraph "... the uneconomical character of the revenue from educational films has led to a virtual standstill in production ... The Governors of the Institute advocate the establishment of regional film libraries, financed by local education authorities, as the only real solution to the problem."

We suggest that this is no solution, since the establishment of further libraries in no way assists the shortage of suitable material complained of in the previous sentence. In addition, it seems unlikely that a local body would be better able to tackle a situation than the central body with its greater authority and knowledge.

Are we right in stating that there are no film units producing educational films solely for use in schools directly under the educational board, and that such material as reaches the libraries are professional documentaries made entirely as a commercial proposition, and reduced to the smaller gauge? It would appear that the professionals are using this market purely as a sideline, where they may reap a little additional income from waste stock, or those films made for public exhibition which happen by chance to be partially suitable.

We have discussed the subject with schoolmasters who are disgusted with the poor selection and haphazard construction of these films. In the few cases where they contain anything useful there is often much waste footage that is irrelevant and quite useless in educating the child mind.

It is strange indeed that educational authorities, in equipping over 2,000 schools, have spent some £200,000 (or more) in providing projectors, and have yet completely overlooked the provision of specially made films.

C. SIMPSON,
Palmer's Green, N.13. H. BADDELEY.

What the Societies Are Doing

Firth Films

(Hon. Sec.: A. J. Nelson, 6, Hilary - Crescent, Ayr.)

With the coming of the recent wintry weather, arrangements were made to continue work on *Ballade for Trio*, since the script demanded a blizzard. The society had been puzzled to know how on earth it could be produced artificially.

During filming, the tripod was blown over three times in five minutes, the sights became blocked with snow, and the players and camera-crew were well-nigh frozen. Snow in the lens ultimately stopped work, but not before 150 ft. of film had been shot.

Hyde Cine Society

(Hon. Sec.: G. Wain, 170, Dowson Road, Hyde, Cheshire.)

At a recent meeting it was reported that three members are now serving with the Forces. They have been made honorary members for the duration of the war. The same evening three new members joined.

Reports and stills for the April issue of "Amateur Cine World" should reach us not later than February 27th.

February 27th was fixed as the date of the annual film show. On this date, too, the annual "Cinemazine" will be issued, and this year it will be a more ambitious production than formerly, containing photographs and articles by members. Regular cinema shows at the local hospital are being given; and the usual fortnightly society shows are also continuing.

Kenton A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: N. Dyer, 263, Kenton Road, Kenton, Middlesex.)

Owing to the fact that several members and officials are now on active service, it has not been possible to adhere to the suggested scheme providing for meetings for the duration. Arrangements have, however, been made with the Kodak Works Photographic Society (Cine

(Continued on next page)

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9.5mm. PROJECTORS

Pathe Home Movie with 300 ft. spool, all mains lighting, very good order. List £9 7 0 ... **£3 10 0**
Pathe H, latest transformer model, exceptionally bright light, list £12 0 0 ... **£7 19 6**
Pathe Lux, type Y.A., a super model, with bright lighting. List £21 0 0 ... **£9 9 0**
Pathe 200B, late type transformer model, new condition. List £17 17 6 ... **£10 0 0**

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8mm. Ditmar, f/2.5 for double 8. List £14 14 0 ... **£7 17 0**

16mm. Kodak, f/1.9, model B, 100 ft. List £30 0 0 ... **£8 10 0**

16mm. Bell Howell Model 70, f/3.5. List £38 0 0 ... **£7 10 0**

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Ensign Maxflat, 7ft. x 5ft., Super self-erecting silver screen in box, one of the best ever made, cost £17 0 0, in good condition, only ... **£7 0 0**
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LIGHTING

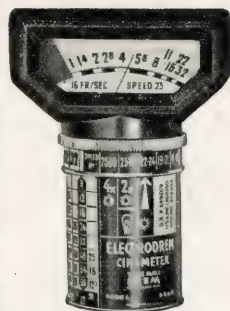
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CLUB NOTES

(Continued from previous page)

Section) for members to attend this society's meetings, which are held every Wednesday.

Oswestry C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: E. D. Power, Albion Hill, Oswestry).

Attendances have gradually crept back to near-normal. Due to the cancellation of visits by a number of lecturers, activities have been concerned mainly with projection. "In this," writes the Hon. Sec., "we have been very fortunate in securing some of the best amateur films available." The Vice-Chairman, Mr. S. W. Bowler, pays a visit this month. The society recently screened a programme of members' films for a literary and debating society. Club films are desired for exchange. Oswestry's are mainly 8mm., with one or two 9.5mm.

Planet A.F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. Roger Dale, 72, Wellington Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middx.).

At the recent A.G.M., officials were re-elected for the coming year. The meeting, among other business, agreed that application should be made for a bar license and that production be immediately resumed—which would mean reverting to pre-war subscriptions (which were drastically reduced as an emergency measure). It is proposed to produce a one-reel story film on 9.5mm. and to complete the 16mm. *Thin Air*.

It was also proposed that a 'stills' section be formed, and members interested in this branch of photography are making the necessary preparations. There is no other photographic society in the district, and any A.C.W. reader who may be interested is asked to communicate with the secretary.

Planet's annual dance will this year take the form of a Leap Year Film Ball at Selbourne Hall, The Cherry Tree, Southgate, N.14, on Thursday, February 29th (8 p.m. till midnight). Details from the Hon. Sec.

Sale and Stretford F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: A. Ball, 53, Woodhouse Lane, Sale, Manchester).

New premises have at last been secured. Thanks to the local press, the drive for new members has been quite successful and when the proscenium and projector box are completed work can be commenced.

Southall & District C.C.

(Hon. Sec.: H. Hurren, 82, Ranelagh Road, Southall, Middx.).

The club recently visited the Studio Marionette Theatre, Chiswick. After a fine show, members soon had photofloods fixed and cameras whirring, taking experimental shots for a film which Mr. H. W. Whanslaw, the leading authority on puppets, has obtained permission for the club to make in the near future. New members welcomed.

Southend-on-Sea 9.5mm. C.C.

(Hon. Sec.: J. C. Scott, 106, Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea).

The new studio premises have now been fitted out. There is a projection room, which

also serves as a store for equipment, and the studio can be used both as theatre and studio.

Successful fortnightly shows have been run for friends of club members. A script has been written for a new production—a drama—which it is hoped will be commenced immediately. At the next show a film of the last carnival will be screened, and the Carnival Queen herself is to be present. There are a few vacancies for new members.

Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. T. Morfey, 51, Beresford Crescent, Newcastle, Staffs.).

Projection programmes during January included films from the F.C.S. library, Kingston C.S. and a selection of the "Ten Best." All deserved better attendances than the weather permitted. For the second time this month a weekly meeting is being cancelled, the district being snow bound.

Kingston C.S. films are all on 8 mm. They were the first film plays on this size the society had seen, apart from one of their own members' version of "It Never Rains." "The makers," they write, "can be congratulated on their fertility of ideas and standard of achievement. Incidentally, why do societies use up valuable stock on credit titles? They convey nothing to strangers and must be redundant on the home screen."

Watford A.C.C.

(Asst. Hon. Sec.: Don Tilley, 233, Uxbridge Road, Rickmansworth, Herts.).

The committee have selected two stories for production, and units are now engaged upon these, on alternate Wednesdays. The stories have been so arranged that one unit is able, generally speaking, to utilise the set which the other unit used on the previous Wednesday. *Pockets* is the title of one production. In accordance with club precedent, it is being directed by its author, John Alsop, and the cameraman is Major Lloyd, so that the two have reversed the roles they occupied with *The Z Ray*. The story is a very light comedy, small—only two principals—and the film will run to about 300 ft.

The Trumped Ace is the other production, written and now being directed by Don Tilley. This is a considerably more ambitious production from the story viewpoint, and uses a much larger cast. Destined to run to 400 ft., it will probably get nearer to 600 ft. when finished.

United Film Productions

(Acting Sec.: J. S. W. Searle-Shirley, 13, St. Ives House, Darvall Square, S.W.18).

The 16mm. S.O.D. film mentioned in last month's A.C.W. is now in hand, and will probably command the attention of the 16mm. unit for some months, being a film of Nature's moods. To fill in the gaps the club is to produce a modern version of 'The Christmas Carol' on 16mm. The secretary's 10-day old son will have a part.

At the last monthly projection show *Malice Aforethought* (16mm.) and *Stolen Centuries* (9.5mm.) were screened. Both films are Beckenham productions, and the 9.5mm. film raised a considerable amount of comment, for among the audience was a professional, who assured the person sitting next to him that it was a 'trade job'; on being shown afterwards that it was a substandard film, he changed his mind about amateurs.

As a follow-on from last month the club put on a display of recording discs in their various stages and sizes, from a 6d. Woolworth 6" early record up to a 16" recording by the society itself. At the next monthly show on Feb. 24th it is hoped to make some further recordings of visitors' voices.

Wimbledon C.C.

(Hon. Sec. : John Symes, Town Hall, East Ham, E.6.)

At a committee meeting it was decided that the club should meet more often, since the meetings held since the outbreak of war have been well supported. Plans for a new production are going ahead. Several members have been giving film shows to Civil Defence and other organisations; one member, who has been evacuated to Cardiff, has also been very active with his projector.

Copies of *The Rabbit*, which was made by various members, are now available for other club shows. The premiere of *The Snob*, the club's latest production, will take place on April 13th.

NEW APPARATUS

16 mm. PROJECTOR

Name. Kodak E.E. Educational Model Kodascope.

Size of Film. 16 mm.

Makers. Kodak Ltd., Kodak House, Kingsway, W.C.

Construction and Finish. The Educational Kodascope is admirably suited for its purpose because of its self-contained character. The instrument, transformer, support and carrying case are so designed that all of them are used during projection, as well as during transit.

The carrying case is of the sheath type which fits right down over the instrument for transit, and alternatively fits below the base-board during projection, automatically providing elevation for the projector.

10 ft. of heavily rubber sheathed supply cable are provided. An earth wire is included in the cable and we heartily commend this. A heavy duty line switch is wired into the cable, plainly marked 'On' and 'Off', and controls all power to the projector. In accordance with present day custom, no plug is provided at the feed end, leaving the user free to follow his own preference. Wherever possible a three-pin plug should be used.

The cover measures 18½" high by 8½" by 11½" in plan. The plan dimensions of the projector base are also 8½" x 11½", while the base is 2" deep, and composed of solid cork within a strong wooden framework. The result is almost silent projection.

There is a short flexible cab-tyre covered lead from the top of the transformer to the projector itself, to which it is connected by plug and socket arrangement. If this connection is broken a special mains lead, which can be obtained from the Kodak dealer, can be plugged in instead, and connected direct to the mains supply. This will enable the instrument to be used on 100-110 volts either A.C. or D.C.

The transformer (in the base of the projector) is contained within a die cast metal case, and this, like the rest of the metal casing of the instrument, is finished in black

FEDERATION MEETINGS

The Federation of Cinematograph Societies is to hold a projection meeting at the R.P.S. premises, 16, Princes Gate, Kensington, London, S.W.7, on Saturday, February 17th, at 3.0 p.m. The following films will be shown:

"Finland To-day" (1938), 16mm. sound film, lent by the Finnish Legation; "Sunday at Volcnov," 16mm. sound film, recently presented to Section B of the Federation's Film Library; "Me and My Dog" and "The Rabbit," two films by the Wimbledon C.C.; "Behold our Leader," a three-reel political farce by the Planet A.F.S.

The Third A.G.M. of the Federation is scheduled for Feb. 29th at 6 p.m.—same premises.

Mr. L. R. Ackland, of 18, Eton Place, North Road, Plymouth, wishes to form a 'combined Cine 8-Theatrical Club' in that district. Interested readers please communicate with him.

All "Amateur Cine World" reports are based on thorough test.

crackle enamel. At the top of the transformer casing is a vertical lug, to which the projector proper is attached by means of a simple swivel joint which can be locked by a butterfly nut, so that the instrument can be held at any desired angle of tilt.

The projector proper is built up from several rather complex die-castings to give a very compact shape.

Transit Mechanism. The drive by leather-belt from the motor spindle is carried up to a horizontal spindle which, by means of a quick pitch thread which is cut on it, drives the two sprockets. On the sprocket spindles are carried the pulleys which drive the feed and take-up spool-arm spindles via spring belts. These pulleys are free to move independently of the spindles, drive being taken up by means of plate-clutches.

There is an external slider control which moves across the film gate. When this is free from the gate, the lower clutch is engaged and the normal take-up spindle is brought into operation. If the slider is pulled across the gate, the upper clutch comes into operation instead and the top spindle is driven to rewind the film.

As the upper pulley is much larger in diameter, the top spindle revolves correspondingly faster, but at no time fast enough to be dangerous to the film. This extremely ingenious and most commendable arrangement thus provides an instantaneous and trouble-free change-over from project to rewind, combined with a safeguard against threading up by mistake with the projector in reverse.

The film gate is a chromium polished plate rigidly connected to the front of the lamp house with a spring loaded pressure plate. The twin claws are in tandem on the right side of the film. 8-picture sprockets are provided, with spring loaded idlers. The

(Continued on next page)

TAKING STOCK

January 31st is the time when we spend lots of time sorting out our big stock. As a consequence we find many items which are reduced in price in order to keep the stock at a minimum at this time—here are just a few of them.

Dekko Standard Model with f/2.5 T.T.H. lens fixed focus ... £5 12 6

Pathoscope Motocamera Model "B" with f/3.5 lens and case ... £3 0 0

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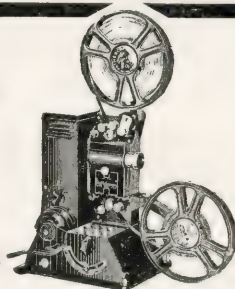
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Coronet Projector, motor, as new, cost £9 17 6, sacrifice £4 15, particulars Donnelly, English Street, Armagh, Ulster.

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9.5 mm. Pathe-Vox Talkie (£65 model), little used, complete, perfect, £38, also Pathe "H" camera (£12 model) as new £7. Brown, "Dolgelley," Brook Avenue, Waybourne, Nr. Farnham.

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16 mm. Sound Library. Private advertiser wishing to form private Talkie Library is open to purchase Secondhand 16 mm. Talkie Films. Must be in good condition. Send full particulars and prices to Box No. 531, A.C.W., 300, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.

16 mm. Sound Films for Exchange. Plaskitt, Flint Hall Farm, Royston, Herts.

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Part time men required throughout the country experienced in handling 16 mm. Sound on Film Projectors. Write giving full details stating when available; if own projector, make and type and whether car owner—Mobile Cinema Services Ltd., "Lyncourt," Corkran Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

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FILM HIRE

9.5 mm. Super Hire. 9d. per reel, two nights. Write particulars. Cox, 506, Felixstowe Road, Ipswich.

Published by Link House Publications Ltd., 300-304, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1. Tel.: Terminus 2451. Printed by Arthurs Press Ltd., Woodchester, Stroud, Glos. Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Gordon & Gotch Ltd. Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd. (London Agents: Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.). Printed in England.

New Apparatus

(Continued from previous page)

speed of the film is controlled by a rheostat on the rear of the resistance chamber.

Lighting and Optics. The source of illumination is an Osram 100 volt 300 watt lamp, with pre-focus cap, and anti-spill cap at the top of the bulb. The lamp is immediately surrounded by a black iron tube of 1½" diameter which concentrates the blast of cooling air. This is contained in a lamp house whose dimensions are 4" x 2½" x 7", giving ample room for cooling. There is a highly polished metal reflector and the condenser can be slipped in and out of a stirrup holder quite freely. No lateral adjustment is provided for these accessories. Above the lamp house is an open grid.

This is the least satisfactory part of the instrument, as there is, in our opinion, too much spill-light permitted to emerge from the top of the lamp house. It should not be difficult for the designers greatly to improve the instrument in this respect without decreasing its efficiency in other directions.

The projection lens is a 2" f/1.6. The back component of the lens is carried in a spring-loaded cell which moves up and down inside the main barrel, so that if the lens is screwed right back close to the gate it is possible to move this for threading purposes. The lens is focussed by revolving the barrel, a helical groove on the barrel engaging with a stop in the lens housing and causing it to move forward or backward. This lens gives a picture 27" x 20" at a distance of 12' 6", or about 5 feet wide at 28 feet. 1", 1½", 3" and 4" lenses are also obtainable. A three bladed shutter ensures absence of flicker at quite slow speeds.

General Remarks. This is a 'workman's projector' with no nonsense about it. It is intended to be used by the teacher or lecturer who has no particular aptitude in handling such apparatus, and who wants trouble-free results over a long period, and resistance to fairly rough treatment. The EE Educational Kodoscope will give him all this. It will give him straightforward projection, and it will give him mechanical rewinding, but it will not give him still pictures or reverse projection, as experience has shown these to be of particularly limited application.

We have kept to the last for special commendation the framing system. By altering the throw of the claw the picture can be framed on the screen without altering the position of its boundaries. We hope to see this preservation of a constant optical centre become universal among sub-standard projectors.

Price. The outfit described above, complete with two spools, oiling and splicing outfit, costs £30.

PHOTO-ELECTRIC EXPOSURE METER

Name. De-Jur Amsco.

Makers or Agents. Cinepro, Ltd., 1, New Burlington Street, W.1.

Description. This entirely American instrument is contained in a moulded bakelite case which measures only 2½" x 1½" x 1", and has a metal loop moulded in it, to which is attached the leather thong or sling by which the instrument is carried.

In use it is held horizontally with the cell, which is situated at one end, pointing towards the subject. The cell window measures approximately 1½" x ¾" and the cell is inclined forwards at an angle of about 45 degrees, to avoid an excessive acceptance of light from the sky. The impulse from the cell passes to a scientifically balanced galvanometer with a jewelled movement. The magnet is of special alloy and the coil wound with extreme precision.

The galvanometer needle passes over a glass-protected curved scale which appears on the upper side of the instrument when it is held in the working position. An unusual note is struck by the fact that the needle points towards the user, instead of away from him as in most instruments of this type. The "maggie" divided scale is marked in single units up to 20, these numbers corresponding to the Weston system of speed notation. (This instrument thus carries on a tendency which we have already observed in American apparatus, to adopt the Weston speed system as standard on other makes of photo-electric meter. We welcome this tendency to converge towards a universal standard.

Reading the Exposure

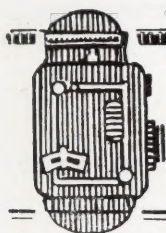
The needle reading is then transferred to a pair of calculation discs which are also on the upper face of the instrument. By placing the needle reading (i.e., light intensity number) against the speed of the chosen film stock, the user can at once read reciprocal pairs of exposure times and apertures on the other half of the pair of discs. The aperture for cine is, of course, read against "1/30th," or the appropriate exposure time in cases when the camera is not running at normal speed. The exposure time scale is calibrated from 1/1,000th of a second in steps up to 60 seconds while the aperture scale has a range extending from f/1 to f/32. A strong pigskin zipper case is available for the meter.

Remarks. This instrument, which is equally available for still and cine use, is simple, sturdy, rapid in use and pleasant in appearance. It can be used with one hand only, and weighs only 3½ ounces. Its accuracy is ensured by the incorporation of a zero adjuster which will take up any variations which might result from age or other cause. In our opinion, this is a good example of a meter of the direct integrating type.

(Next month's reports include a review of the Phono-Disc sound recording and reproducing unit).

"WIDE ANGLE" SHOTS

In last month's "Running Commentary," it should be pointed out that the statement in brackets (foot of column 3, page 486) applies only to the case of focussing on the image seen in a plane mirror. In the case of a convex mirror, the camera should be focussed on a point about 6 inches behind the mirror surface, the exact distance being approximately half the radius of curvature of the mirror. This is the point where the "virtual image" lies; the extreme depth of focus obtained in such shots is due to this.



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